

THE
SCHOOL
FOR *N*
WIVES.
IN A
SERIES of LETTERS.



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SERIES 1



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INTRODUCTION.

The EDITOR to the READER.

* * * * * S some introduction to the follow-
* A * ing little piece may be expected, I
* * * think I cannot prefix one more
proper, than an account of the au-
thor's design, in this publication.

I was sent for, some time ago to a lady, who has long been my intimate acquaintance. On my entrance, I found her seated by a table, covered with papers.

My dear friend, said she, to your discretion I intrust this manuscript. If you think it may be useful to the world, I shall be justified to others for the publication, whilst my good intention justifies me to myself. My fears of ill success have hitherto retarded my design, but as my present state of health perhaps threatens a speedy dissolution, I know no person in whom I can so steadily confide as yourself. Probably, my death may facilitate the wished for purpose. The admonitions

of the dead, are generally more effectual than the remonstrances of the living. Very few can bear *that* superiority, which the office of giving advice presupposes, and whilst the conduct of the adviser is not wholly exempt from human frailty, we are disgusted with the attempt to reform others. We are apt to think, *perfection* only has a right to prescribe rules of action.—But I submit the piece to your judgment, to be either condemned to obscurity, or to venture into the world.

I flatter myself, the writer's design will be fully answered. As she has not written with a desire of gaining fame, but of dispensing instruction, she was regardless of the former, but as it inspired her with hopes of the latter. I shall only add, that the work seems calculated to improve the mind of every reader. That it may have the effect, wished for by the writer, is sincerely desired by a friend to human kind in general, and to the author in particular.

THE



THE
S C H O O L
F O R
W I V E S.

L E T T E R I.

Mrs. FRANKLY to Miss GOODWILL.

W H E N I parted from my dear daughter I requested of her, that she would write to me every week, and that she would communicate every circumstance that happened—A request, which to a child so dutiful, and affectionate, appeared unnecessary, but which a parent's fondness obliged me to repeat, she promised, and for some time complied with it: Indeed she has never failed to write, but

of late it has been in so constrained a manner, I am alarmed.—I know not whether her silence would occasion me more uneasiness. Reports too have reached this place, injurious to your brother—Surely it cannot be.—My child cannot be neglected by the man, who seemed to live only for her.—Yet a mother's fears are ever awake—Perhaps I unnecessarily torment myself.—From you my dear, I request an explanation. My son, tho' free from that rashness of disposition, which often precipitates into vice, and tho' he loves Mr. Goodwill, not only as a brother but as a friend, is not a proper person to be consulted on this occasion—I dare not ask my daughter to remove my doubts. Her principles will not permit her to accuse an husband, even to a tender parent—I intreat *you* Miss Goodwill to answer me sincerely, or, notwithstanding the inconvenience, my health has always suffered in London, I will undertake the journey—Whatever is the result of my enquiry, I shall be easier than under this cruel suspense.

I am,

My dear,

Your affectionate humble servant,

MARIANA FRANKLY.

L E T-

LETTER II.

Miss GOODWILL to Mrs. FRANKLY.

I AM much concerned, Dear Madam, that any thing gives you uneasiness. Would to heaven, it was in my power to remove it!—As you earnestly desire an answer, and your presence here could only add to distress, I must unwillingly confirm the disagreeable reports with which you have been afflicted—yet perhaps, my brother is rather deceived than criminal—Never man felt so strongly the influence of love and esteem—Never was woman so deserving of both—He cannot cease to love and esteem her, yet these sentiments have not been able to preserve him from the infection of bad example. He has contracted an acquaintance with one lord Rovewel, a wretch, whose specious appearance has deceived my brother into a belief, that he is worthy of friendship—His unsuspecting confidence will be an endless source of remorse to him, and occasion his friends lasting uneasiness. How far it has betrayed him I know not, but Mr. Frankly's, and my remonstrances, have been ineffectual to break off the acquaintance.

My poor sister pines in secret, and endeavours to assume an appearance of chearfulness, but her looks are a faithful representation of her mind. Notwithstanding our friendship, she has never uttered a reproachful word of my brother. Even to you, she has not disclosed her uneasiness. I admire, I reverence those virtues, which I find myself incapable of practising. My temper, naturally haughty and impetuous, would, on such treatment, have hurried me into excesses, my reason would have condemned, and which might have produced fatal effects.—I own, I have upbraided my brother—perhaps too severely—At least, my sister's tenderness would certainly deem it so—But I cannot bear such excellence should suffer. Yet let me not, Madam, add to your affliction, but permit me to open a prospect of relief. Rely on the goodness of my brother's heart, and his love for your Clarinda. A false shame may deter him from a confession of his fault—My reproaches, may have irritated, instead of convincing him. I will not think, he dare imagine my sister knows, I have upbraided his conduct—He must be more sensible of her virtues, than to entertain such a suspicion—Had I imitated her example, his reformation might sooner have been effected.—Pardon,

Madam, my hasty, impertinent zeal—It was well meant—I will endeavour to gain my sister's confidence, or, if I cannot, I will, like her, attempt to reclaim by mildness. Mr. Frankly's intimacy, and near alliance may give him opportunities of intreating my brother to abandon lord Rovewell, and his vile associates.

You shall soon hear from me again, and I will write to you constantly. Let me beg, Madam, you will not mention to the dear sufferer that I have imparted this secret. But I intreat your pardon for supposing you are not as proper a judge of what is right as myself.

You will excuse my freedom, and regard only the sincere good intention that actuates

Your ever devoted and faithful,

LUCY GOODWILL.

LET-

LETTER III.

Miss GOODWILL to Mrs. FRANKLY.

Dear Madam,

MY heart is so full, that unless I could vent its emotions to you, I know not how I could support them. *Your* impatience is certainly painful, and *I* am too much interested in the subject I am entering upon, to add to the preface. When I had finished my Letter to you, I stole up to my sister's chamber. My design was to enter unobserved, and I did so. Little Charly laid asleep upon her lap. Her eyes were intently fixed on him, and her mind so impressed with her misfortunes, she was insensible of my approach. I could not help viewing her with that reverential awe, due to a superior Being—I was about to speak, when she softly began, her sobs frequently interrupting the pathetic soliloquy.

“ It is in vain, said she, to think—My misfortune is evident, and I have only this resource, that my husband shall not have reason to accuse my conduct—No—whatever I suffer, he shall not know I am acquainted with the alteration in his heart—Was I to ease mine, by chusing a confidant, that confidence

fidence would render me unworthy of finding a friend—Yet—if my influence could recall him to a sense of his duty, ought I to be silent?—But alas! when the affections are alienated, and the irregular passions from indulgence have acquired strength, the opposition of a person supposed to be wholly self-interested, rather inflames than extinguishes a criminal heat. Is there not some fault in me, to justify his withdrawing that love, in the possession of which, I was lately happy?—Not in my intention. There, my heart entirely acquits me, of harbouring a thought contrary to my love or virtue.” Let me consider—After some moments pause, she resumed, “He still esteems me—When he proves the uneasy tormenting reflections, which must arise in a mind naturally fraught with every virtue, yet now precipitated into vice, religion will appear in a truly amiable light, and by the assurances it gives the sincere penitent of present peace and future felicity, recall him to the path from which he has wandered—Yet—have I not to fear that the Deity, offended at his violations of duty, may snatch him away in the Commission of a crime?—Shocking reflection!—And then my little infant—Helpless innocent! Unnatural parent!”

Here

Here she burst into so violent a flood of tears, as prevented her farther utterance. I forgot I was an intruder. I flew to her, and clasped her in my arms—A look of self-reproach, upbraided my curiosity more than if she had spoke.—I beg pardon, dearest sister, cry'd I, tenderly embracing her, for daring to intrude; but I will own to you, I wanted to steal the information, you cruelly denied me. In vain I have enquired the cause of that uneasiness you have been so studious to conceal, but which could not escape the penetrating eye of friendship. I found you melancholy—I have heard your complaints. Ah! sister, why are you so unkind, as to refuse me the right of participation in your griefs? But my brother can inform me;—I will learn from him his crime, which must be great, to occasion such sufferings.

I was determined to seek my brother, and to inform him of her situation, but she stopped me, “I intreat, said she with the most affecting earnestness, that if you love me, if you value my peace of mind, you will not mention to Mr. Goodwill, that you have seen me uneasy.” Be explicit then my dear Clarinda, answered I, do not thus become a prey to sorrow; you will by communicating, soften your affliction, and perhaps

haps I may assist you to remove the cause. Indulge me with your confidence, or I will extort from my brother a confession of his guilt; for I will no longer calmly bear to see you suffer.

“How cruel, replied she, is this alternative! You must not, indeed you must not ask Mr. Goodwill any questions on this subject; but you force me to acknowledge, what I wish ever to keep secret. Instead of relieving, you take from me the sad consolation of deploring my fate in silence, which is a duty I owe to him who is most dear to me.—You must not upbraid Mr. Goodwill,—Oh! my Lucy, your brother—loves me no longer—

Then he is unworthy to live, cried I hastily, I pity you from my soul, and I almost hate my brother, for being the cause of such uneasiness.—“Hush, interrupted she, blame not a conduct, for which in his cooler moments I know he abhors himself—Alas! he is more to be pitied than I am. The conscious innocence of my heart, the assurance my sufferings cannot long continue, and that a blessed immortality will amply compensate for this transitory pain, soften the rigor of *my* misfortune: But for him—Unhappy, mistaken man!—Groaning beneath the pressure

sure of guilt, ashamed of his deviation, yet wanting resolution to return to his duty—what must he suffer! oh! that wretch Lord Rovewell! I date the beginning of my misery, from the commencement of that acquaintance. "Till then, he preferred my company to every other enjoyment;" but now—wretched infatuation resumed I, seeing her unable to proceed, which can induce a husband, and a father, to abandon such a wife, and child!

"Ah! there my Lucy, said she, with a heart-drawn sigh, you name a poignant source of affliction!—Why, dear pledge of former happiness, why did I introduce thee to a state of misery?—What will become of thee?"—She wrung her clasped hands, and lifting up her eyes swimming in tears, seemed to supplicate for him the protection of heaven, while the sweet babe, insensible of her grief, lay smiling upon her.

Seeing me silently weeping, for indeed I was unable to speak, she added, "Alas! I pain your gentle heart.—Let me intreat you to keep the sad secret inviolably safe. Advise me how to act—Shall I attempt to reason with him, or shall I still conceal my knowledge of his change?" Would to heaven, dear sister, answered I, it was in my power to advise you. Was it my own case I

should certainly upbraid him with my wrongs, but *your* character forbids such a conduct. Yet surely, you might hint at the horrid behaviour of Lord Rovewell, and intreat him to break off the acquaintance.—“How exalted must be the mind, which dictated this answer! I know not what to do—But I am determined never to upbraid him—Have I ever discover’d any suspicion of his fault? I would not have him imagine I am uneasy, lest he should with too much severity, accuse himself. I could not forbear exclaiming, Excellent woman! how unworthy is he, of such a tender solicitude! Your conduct is the brightest example to our sex!—I am amazed at the fortitude you have shewn. I have seen you receive my brother with a face veiled in the sweetest smiles, whilst I am certain your heart bled, from a painful sensibility! When he has caressed his little boy, with a conscious glow, arising from reflections on his own unworthiness, your eyes have glistened, with the delightful hope of his reformation, yet how studiously have you avoided any particular attention to his behaviour!

“Do not, said she blushing, do not so highly praise a conduct, I have with difficulty preserved, and which could alone entitle me to a return of my husband’s affection. Believe

lieve me, the heart which is once estranged, will not be recalled by tears nor reproaches. They will rather harden, or fatigue, for compassion only will not sufficiently re-animate a mind susceptible of softer impressions, and which has lost its relish for the object that inspired them."

We now heard some person in the next room, which obliged us to break off the conversation. My sister only added, pressing my hand, "Remember, my dear Lucy, you compelled me to reveal a secret, I never intended to divulge, and preserve it with the strictest caution."

The servant's entrance to acquaint us company was below, prevented my answer. We adjusted our looks, and went down. Soon after I retired to my chamber, to give you this intelligence.—My sister's character is so raised in my esteem, that I shall not taste of happiness, 'till she enjoys it. If you can think of any method to promote it, I need not *desire* you to convey the welcome information, to

Dear Madam,

Your truly sympathizing,

LUCY GOODWILL.

L E T-

LETTER IV.

Mrs. FRANKLY to Miss GOODWILL.

Her second Letter not received.

Dear Miss Goodwill,

IT is difficult to determine, what situation will most contribute to our ease, or happiness! I, who lately imagined suspense to be the most racking state, and hoped a relief, even from a certainty my fears were just, am now convinced, *that* painful suspense was less tormenting, than the dreadful explanation which succeeds it!—Oh! my dear, your Letter pierced my soul!—Is it possible? Can my child, the darling of my heart, the delight, and admiration, of all who beheld, and conversed with her, can she be neglected by a husband, to whom her merit must be most conspicuous. Who owes perhaps to her, those refined sentiments, which I once fondly hoped, would have influenced his conduct? How soon alas! are all my flattering expectations vanished! Perhaps I indulged too much the satisfaction of my heart—Perhaps I imagined my dear child placed beyond the reach of adversity—I thought her virtues secured her from tasting the bitter cup of affliction! Sad conviction of my error!—For-

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give the transports of a mother's despair, who finds the dear support of her life, deprived of every blessing, and rendered miserable, by the unkindness of him, whose duty it is to protect, and reward her virtue! What will become of that sweet babe, whose birth was the subject of thankfulness, and the completion of our happiness? Short-sighted mortals!—

How will my generous son, that tender brother, that affectionate friend, how will he support his sister's misery, his friend's degeneracy? Will not her misfortune awaken in him a resolution to revenge her wrongs, though on a person lately so dear to him? Thought is dreadful—imagination distracts me—Can you, my dear Miss Goodwill, can you pity and excuse the tedious repetitions my griefs occasion? My heart overflows—It will dictate to my pen its wretchedness—But you *will*, you *do* feel for me—You will not blame my indulging this transitory relief, nor think the expression of my fears, the weakness of age.

Do not, my dear, impart to my child your suspicions of her husband.—Do not betray her into a confession of his unkindness—I know her so well, that was you to force from her an accusation of Mr. Goodwill, she would

despise herself, for having been guilty of a breach of duty. I am at a loss, how to act—Suppose I write to him,—Suppose I mention the suggestions of the world, and assure him of the inviolable secrecy, his wife has maintained—Shall I represent to him her wretched situation, made still more deplorable by that constraint, she thinks it her duty to preserve?—I will lay down my pen, and consider—



Your second Letter, my dear, was put into my hands, whilst I was revolving what conduct I ought to observe, in regard to your first—I find I was too late in my cautions—You have drawn from her the fatal secret—How I pity her distress!—How I admire the noble conflict!—Tenderness for her unworthy husband, combated with her desire of preserving his character—*That* character which he has forfeited—How dares he to slight that affection, which confers on him more honour, than all his fancied endowments?—No—I will not write to him—I am not calm enough—My daughter's happiness is too dear to me, to permit my hazarding the entire forfeiture of it, for I am certain, even her existence depends on her hopes of regaining his heart—Inconsiderate, and blind Goodwill!—But I am writing to
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his sister, and as I cannot forbear to mention him, with the resentment of an injured mother, I will add only, on this subject, May God give him grace to repent!—For my dear daughter's sake, I wish him repentance, and even for his own—poor thoughtless wretch!—though he has destroyed the peace of his *once* fond mother, and

Your *ever* affectionate friend,

MARIANA FRANKLY.

L E T T E R V.

Mrs. FRANKLY to Mr. FRANKLY.

My dear Son,

YOU will perhaps be surprized to find, I am no stranger to Mr. Goodwill's conduct: The reports I heard, excited my apprehensions so strongly, I could not restrain them from prompting a request to Miss Goodwill, that she would acquaint me with the truth. I dared not apply to you, fearing I might say too much on the affecting subject, and either add to the resentment you must feel, if the informations were just, or awaken suspicions to Mr. Goodwill's prejudice, if they proved groundless. You will pity my fears, rather than be displeased with this

this

this effect of them, for I find I might have trusted you. Your moderation increaseth my love, whilst your ineffectual remonstrances to Mr. Goodwill, redouble my affliction—persevere, my dear son, in that calmness I applaud—Endeavour to restore him to your sister by mild exhortations. Remember he is still her husband, and that his weakness claims the assistance of friendship. Do not aggravate your sister's wrongs, by an attempt to revenge them. I charge you, on my blessing, always to preserve that happy disposition, which has hitherto been the guide of your actions.

Mr. Goodwill is not an abandoned libertine—Example, and want of resolution, rather than inclination, have drawn him into the path of vice—My daughter's merit, your prudence, and his innate sensibility will restore him to virtue—He will soon despise the society he now delights in, and himself for being capable of relishing their amusements. Believe me, he will suffer more pain from conviction of his delusion, and the miseries it has occasioned, than your reproaches, or even your sword can inflict—I hope the happy time is not far distant, when you will embrace the sincere penitent, and soothe his mind to a forgiveness of its own errors—

But I need say no more—Your heart is your best monitor—I hardly know whether grief for my daughter's affliction, or admiration of her virtues, is most predominant in my breast—Both are inexpressible!—But I will change the subject—God grant I may never have occasion to renew it!—

When may I congratulate you on your marriage? O may this wished for union be productive of every blessing!—In your happiness, and my dear daughter's, is included that of

Your ever affectionate mother,

MARIANA FRANKLY.

LETTER VI.

Mr. FRANKLY to Mrs. FRANKLY.

YOU ask me, Madam, when you may congratulate me on my marriage.—Alas! the question embarrasses me. Why are you inquisitive?—Pardon me, that I wished to conceal, and most from you, my observations on Mr. Goodwill's behaviour.—Such a parent's request has with me the force of a command. That tenderness you have ever shewn me, the interest you take in my happiness, your constant desire of alleviating,

viating, or sharing my afflictions, demand my duty, my affection, the sacrifice of every other inclination, which must yield to the right you have over me. Your maternal care has well supplied to me, the loss of a tender father. You shall be the repository of my secrets. To you, I will have no reserve.—I will not ask you to conceal what I shall impart—Your known discretion is my security—You are impatient for my information—You doubtless foresaw that your enquiry would induce my confidence, and that your acknowledging yourself acquainted with the sad truth, would extort from me every circumstance you wish to know. I feel an unwillingness to begin, for the recollection of past happiness, increases the weight of present misery—But it must be overcome—.

You approved my affection for Miss Spendlove. Mr. Goodwill, as her guardian, was consulted, and indeed our alliance and intimacy, rendered him acquainted with every emotion of my heart. He joyfully acquiesced. The amiable object of my passion, did not disdain it, though she seemed not so sensible as I wished, of the tender influence. She lived then with her aunt, but on the old lady's decease, my sister, you know, with her husband's approbation, invited her to

their house. She complied, and they soon after coming up to town, for the winter, she accompanied them. I followed her, and solicited my brother, to hasten the completion of my happiness. He promised, but other engagements, new acquaintance engrossed him. He became intimate with lord Rowell; he saw him on a visit, was captivated by his conversation, and contracted a fondness for a wretch, who assumed the appearance of honour, only to deceive. My unguarded friend, too easily admitted him to his bosom. Hearing, I suppose, afterwards his real character, or finding by experience, he had too precipitately formed an acquaintance, he became dissatisfied and uneasy. Yet instead of abandoning Rowell, he is only grown more cautious in mentioning him, and invites him less frequently to his house. His friendship for me, seems cooled. He avoids speaking of my marriage, shuns my company, and when forced to be with me, his constrained looks prove, that his heart sympathizes with his gloomy appearance: That he fears reproaches he is conscious of deserving, yet fascinated by lord Rowell, he cannot give up an acquaintance, who has robbed him of his happiness—His Clarinda, whose praises were once the most pleasing theme of his discourse, whose
exalted

exalted merit claims an eternal constancy, alas! dear Madam, she seems to have lost her influence over his heart. He speaks of her no more, and if I mention her, his blushes tacitly confess, he is sensible of her unequalled goodness, and of some alteration in himself, which whilst he condemns, he knows not how to amend. I have intreated him to avoid an intimacy with lord Rovewell, and by degrees to drop all acquaintance—But he enjoins me silence. He cannot defend, he tells me, every particular of lord Rovewell's character, but he has obligations to him, which he must conceal, and which prevent his declining the acquaintance. What can these obligations be? My anxiety is equal to my friendship for him, and affection for my sister.—Disappointed love too, agitates my soul—He will not hear me speak of marriage—What can I do?—Who has sufficient interest to procure for me the happiness of my life?—Or if I knew to whom I could apply, shall I betray my friend?—Every face in the family is changed, and every heart is engrossed by some uneasiness it attempts to conceal.—My sister, my amiable sister, shews only by her altered looks the disorder of her mind—In her, the tender wife, the fond mother, suffers!—Miss Goodwill, whose natural cheerfulness seemed

seemed to indicate a mind, less capable of sensibility, is deeply interested in the cause of friendship. She feels for the anxieties of the wife, the anguish of the mother. She condemns the infatuation, whilst she pities the weakness of the husband. But I believe her compassion and admiration of her sister, excite stronger emotions of resentment to her brother, than pity for his self-inflicted sufferings can subdue.

As to *my* Charlotte (I hardly dare call her so) her behaviour is so much altered, so inconsistent, I know not to what cause to attribute the change. That artless disposition I once observed in her, which heightened my esteem, though it did not perfectly satisfy my love, has now given place to a gloomy fretfulness. She treats me with contempt, and even seems to view me with disgust—Heaven forbid, that I should wish to purchase my own, by the sacrifice of her happiness! Indeed mine depends on its being mutual. *I will* know my fate.

Be not fearful, Madam, that passion should prompt me to revenge my dear sister, nor that even love can render me insensible to the dictates of friendship—I know, I pity Mr. Goodwill—His heart has swerved from his duty, and how much more severe, must
be

be the anguish he feels, than that which he inflicts ! I will endeavour to regain him by such methods only, as your goodness advises. Comfort yourself, Dearest Madam, by indulging that favourable judgment, you wished to inspire in me—My sister's cause, is the cause of heaven, and her triumph, will be aided by its assistance. Trust me, this superior instance of her virtue, will more firmly cement their union—For my own part I dread, yet am impatient to know my doom. Pity, Madam, a lover whose fears infinitely exceed his hopes. Whether the latter be gratified, or the former confirmed, neither the transports of my joy, nor the excess of my despair, can weaken the duty and affection, of

Your ever obedient son,

And grateful humble servant,

HENRY FRANKLY.

LET.

LETTER VII.

Miss GOODWILL to Mrs. FRANKLY.

Dear Madam,

I CAN readily excuse the first emotions of your resentment against my brother, for I am little less affected than yourself with the misfortunes, of which his behaviour has been productive—Oh! Madam, I fear I have made another painful discovery! A conversation with Miss Spendlove yesterday, awakened new suspicions. I will impart it to you. I had frequently heard her drop disrespectful hints about my sister, and as she often proved herself an observing spectator of my brother's change, I thought it no forfeiture of the enjoined secrecy, to make her a convert to my sister's virtues, and even considered it as my duty to remove those unjust sentiments, for which I could not account.

After a proper introduction to the discourse, I begged she would ingenuously tell me what she thought of my brother's conduct; if she was not amazed at the alteration in his temper? This acquaintance with lord Rovewell, added I, has alienated him from his family. The man, who almost idolized my

my sister, who could scarcely support her absence a moment, during the first year of their marriage, has, for some time, appeared insensible of her endeavours to oblige him, seems pleased with every opportunity of leaving her, is pensive, and melancholy in her presence. Is it not strange?—I fixed my eyes steadily upon her. Her blushes, and downcast looks, confessed emotions she wished to conceal. She at last answered, Indeed I am afraid, Mr. Goodwill seeks amusement amongst the loose part of our sex, for lord Rowewell has an infamous character. But is not Mrs. Goodwill somewhat to blame? Does she really endeavour to render him happy? He is so amiable, I cannot help thinking, she must be faulty, or he could not be indifferent. How you wrong my sister, cried I hastily; it is amazing that she can support with such fortitude, and unrepining sweetness, a conduct she has not deserved. She *would* seem insensible of it, but the visible alteration in her looks, betrays her uneasiness. Good God! who can expect constancy in man? If piety, free from superstition and bigotry, if true benevolence of heart, and gentleness of manners, if affection, founded on the noblest motives, added to the utmost beauty of form, can render a person,

person, worthy of esteem and love, who can excuse my brother?

Do you really think, resumed Miss Spendlove, that Mrs. Goodwill is a very fine person? She is a genteel woman, but I can't think her handsome. Her eyes are too large, and though most people say, she has a charming bloom, I am of opinion she has too much colour. Indeed, *now* she wants a little animating blush. Then surely she is not strait—She is a shewy woman upon the whole, but will not bear examination. Pray, my dear, don't you think her too exactly neat? She dresses well, but is so prim, so attentive to place every pin in due order, I cannot like it. Every woman should regard fashion, but not be such a slave to propriety and neatness.

You surprize me, replied I, by your singularity. Every other person allows, my sister's form to be as faultless as her mind, and that both are free from blemish. In her dress, whilst she consults nature, she does not disregard fashion, where it is consistent with decency, and a due regard to circumstances. She affects no singularity. Ease and dignity are conspicuous in her manners and appearance.—I love my brother, but my love, esteem, gratitude, and reverence, are engaged

engaged to my sister. I shall ever thankfully acknowledge my obligations. Perhaps you know not the extent of her goodness—My father's imprudence had involved my brother, and me, in distress; for after his death, instead of an expected fortune, we found he left insufficient to discharge his debts. Miss Frankly hastened to our relief, paid every creditor, and when my brother, from a motive of generosity, would have declined accepting her hand, she assured him, her heart was more firmly attached to him than ever, and that if he thought her worthy his regard, it should be her study to prove, that her tenderness, was incapable of diminution.

Miss Spendlove appeared embarrassed. Certainly, said she, Mrs. Goodwill shewed a disinterested regard, but who could behave otherwise to such a man? I am indebted to both for their kindness, but particularly to Mr. Goodwill, for accepting the office of guardian, to a poor orphan.

You cannot imagine, I wish to lessen your good opinion of my brother, answered I, but I would have you think more justly of my sister. He is generous, noble, and tender, though these sentiments have for some time, seemed obliterated; but believe me, there is not one good quality *inherent* in his mind,

mind, which does not *beam forth* from my sister's—Who but herself could conceal the racking uneasiness, she must suffer? Who else could forbear to vent reproaches to a sister, more allied to her by the ties of friendship, than marriage?

She could not help saying, Mrs. Goodwill is really amiable, and I assure you, it is my earnest wish, Mr. Goodwill would relinquish the pleasures he now delights in, and oblige us with his company. She then changed the subject, when I, to facilitate my scheme, ventured to ask her the reason of her treating Mr. Frankly in a manner so unsuitable to his merit, and the regard he feels for her. You do not, said I, encourage any other lover—If you dislike him, you are blameable in receiving his addresses. You will perhaps think me impertinent, but I cannot forbear to tell you, I doubt you prefer some other person—Am I entitled, my Charlotte, to your confidence? But let me not embarrass you—That blush, and starting fear, accuse me of improper curiosity.

She coolly answered, I cannot satisfy you—Pray interrogate me no farther—I begged pardon, promised to be no more troublesome, and seeing her still uneasy, and confused, retired to my own chamber.

I fear you will blame me for acquainting my sister with this conversation—I added a wish, that Miss Spendlove was removed from the house—I flattered myself, my information might be a means of restoring peace to the family.

This confidence, and your advice, replied my sister, I know proceed from affection; but you have not sufficiently weighed the matter. Miss Spendlove's residence with me, was my proposal. To view the affair in the light of human policy, I should exasperate Mr. Goodwill, and the young lady, and instead of regaining his love, lose his good opinion. But I consider only my husband's present and future interest, and that as wife to Miss Spendlove's guardian, I am more particularly engaged by duty to promote her return to virtue. I own I have sometimes suspected her of partiality to Mr. Goodwill; but 'till you confirmed my opinion, I was willing to think it a causeless apprehension. I will talk to her on the subject, and hope to find her heart so much devoted to virtue, that this affection proceeds rather from an overflowing of gratitude, of which she is ignorant of the extent, than from a criminal inclination.

Mr. Goodwill may be unconscious of her love, and I *will* hope, does not wish to inspire it.

I could not help embracing, and telling my sister, her prudence and virtue were her safest guides.—That the result of the intended conference may be the re-establishment of happiness, to each particular of the family, is the sincere prayer of,

Dear Madam,

Your affectionate and faithful,

LUCY GOODWILL.

L E T T E R VIII.

Miss GOODWILL to Mrs. FRANKLY.

SURELY, Madam, my sister is more than woman! When you read an account of her exalted behaviour, even *you* can scarcely avoid thinking her too perfect, to be merely mortal. I was acquainted with the time she proposed to talk with Miss Spendlove. Prompted by female curiosity, and a desire of hearing *all* my sister's sentiments, some of which I feared her modesty would omit in a recital, I placed myself in a closet, where I had not only an opportunity of listening to
their

their conversation, but of observing their looks—Miss Spendlove was reading when my sister entered the room. Indeed the subject of her employment facilitated the scheme. My sister, in a most obliging manner, told the other, that hearing she was alone, she came to sit with her 'till dinner was served. Then asking, what book she had in her hand, Miss Spendlove told her, It was Sir Charles Grandison. And are you not charmed, my dear, resumed my sister, with Richardson's manner of writing? In my opinion, his works are better calculated for public utility, than any of his contemporaries—What justness, and delicacy of sentiment! What fine rules of morality! What a thorough knowledge of nature!—But are you not particularly pleased with the artless, simplicity of Emily? How noble an effort was hers, to conquer a passion, that stole into her breast beneath the veil of gratitude, and which she indulged, as a generous sentiment.

Miss Spendlove's embarrassment betrayed her. After a pause, she answered, with frequent hesitation, "Certainly, Madam, she was a noble girl—Yes—'twas a proper resolution—And to be sure—But don't you think Lady Grandison had a tincture of jealousy

lously in her composition?—Lady Grandison's concern, my dear, reply'd my sister, with a sigh she could not suppress, seems rather to proceed from affection, and apprehension, for a fair friend, than a jealous suspicion. Indeed, whilst she suffered the pain of uncertainty, we cannot wonder at her fears; but after having received Sir Charles's addresses, she had such perfect confidence in his love and honour, that friendship only could give rise to her solicitude. Emily's resolution was highly praise-worthy, and she pursued the only method which could restore her heart, unwarily entangled in an illaudable passion—Do you think then, Madam, said Miss Spendlove eagerly, it is blameable to indulge the highest esteem for a man of consummate merit, though he is the husband of another? Is not that circumstance a sufficient defence against a criminal inclination.

That consideration may, and ought to suppress a guilty attachment, answered your amiable daughter, but alas! my dear, a fancied security too often deceives into real danger. Gratitude insensibly betrays the unwary heart into a more tender sentiment.—A young Lady who refuses to marry a worthy man, because she has an high esteem for the husband of another woman, ought to suspect
the

the rectitude of her intentions. If she really felt only esteem, what should prevent her entering into an engagement, where esteem and love must blend, to form a perfect union? What say you, my Charlotte?

It is impossible for me to describe the confusion painted on Miss Spendlove's countenance. The agitation of her mind was visible. With an affected air of unconcern, she at last uttered, "You seem, Madam, to suspect—I don't know—Pray is not dinner served up?"—My sister mildly replied, You appear embarrassed, my dear—Recollect yourself,—What do you imagine I suspect? She paused awhile: Miss Spendlove could not speak, and my sister added; "Look on me, my dear, as your sincere friend—You shall always find me so—Disclose the secrets of your heart—Tell me, has it not admitted a dangerous guest? You are in love, my Charlotte, and you love—my husband—You start. I am not displeased—I pity you from my soul, and will assist you to overcome a passion, which if indulged, will prove more fatal to your peace, than to my repose. Miss Spendlove was still silent, yet her looks discovered more confusion than uneasiness.

You have behaved to my brother, proceeded your dear daughter, in a manner

which your good sense cannot justify, nor your natural disposition prompt. Why have you exerted your wit to wound a person, who loves you so unfeignedly? Believe me, wit loses its real essence, when it is not supported by good-nature—It was not designed to hurt, but to amuse—To render any one uneasy is a species of malevolence—Did you imagine him incapable of a retort, because he calmly submitted to your unjust ridicule. He pitied the weakness of your judgment, and wished the intemperate sallies of your wit had been restrained.

Whatever Mr. Frankly thought of me, answered Miss Spendlove haughtily, he ought not to have complained—I will not bear his pity.—Indeed you accuse him falsely, resumed my sister, his looks only have shewn his disapprobation of your conduct. But all men of sense must think meanly of a person, who to indulge a frivolous jest, sacrifices another's ease. Forgive me, my dear, *I* have pitied you, when I have seen your unguarded attention to Mr. Goodwill, and your disregard of me. Consider seriously, my love! What obligations have you to him, which exclude me from an equal share of your regard—Her manner was irresistible, and her arguments awakened conviction. Miss Spendlove yielded

yielded to the persuasive rhetoric—A violent burst of tears now flowed from a contrite heart.—When she recovered the power of utterance, “Your generosity, said she, confounds me. I am sensible of my error—I have been misled, without a consciousness of my deviation”—I know it my dear, returned my sister tenderly; I am convinced you have too much goodness of disposition to indulge a suspected passion—Gratitude ensnared you. Miss Spendlove sobbed out, “Oh! Madam, why do you treat me with such gentleness? I cannot bear it—You must surely hate me.” —“Why, said my sister, should I feel resentment and malevolence, when your situation claims tenderness and pity? I was happier, even in the *privation* of every temporal blessing, than *you* could have been in the *possession* of every criminal desire. Believe me, my dear Charlotte, the acknowledgement of an error, and generous preference of another’s conduct, is the effect of a real greatness of mind—Let me not oppress you—If you chuse I should withdraw, I will this instant leave you.”

Miss Spendlove, catching hold of her gown, cried, “Oh! no, you must not leave me—Stay, most amiable woman, and hear me confess a fault, for which I will study to

atone. I own that Mr. Goodwill's amiable person attracted my admiration, yet his sweetness of disposition, and refined understanding, more strongly gained my esteem. An esteem, which I thought due to his character, and proceeding from gratitude, I indulged as laudable. But I am now convinced, that had my regard been innocent, I had felt an equal sense of the obligations I owe you, instead of which (forgive me the crime) your amiable qualities excited in me an envious dislike, and I attempted to depreciate perfections which it would be my highest glory to imitate."

This confession is ingenuous, answered my sister, embracing her. Be assured, my dear, had Mr. Goodwill felt a reciprocal affection, you could not have been happy. You would have gained his love, by the forfeiture of his esteem, and that short-lived passion would probably have been succeeded by contempt. You would have formed an attachment destructive of my happiness, and to assist your fallacious design, might perhaps have wished to destroy, in me, the only obstacle to your perfect security. Such are the progressions of vice! An action, from which the truly innocent would start with abhorrence, becomes soon familiar to the guilty—Let this instance,

stance, my dear Miss Spendlove, be a caution to you, always to distrust the source, from whence an irregular emotion flows.— Do not weep, my beloved friend. I pitied you, whilst you offended virtue, but I admire and love you, for your return to it. If my heart acquits me of any intentional deviation, it teaches me to excuse the frailty of others, especially those which proceed from a mistaken principle, and are the ebullitions of a noble, tho' unguarded mind.

I am certain Miss Spendlove felt the emotions of gratitude she thus expressed: You animate me, Dearest Madam, to deserve your generous forgiveness. How could I injure such a woman? You have convinced me, that to raise our own characters, on the ruins of others, proves we have no intrinsic worth. That we deceive ourselves, when we think any inclination laudable, which is productive of another's misery, or that renders us forgetful of any part of our duty.

“You are in the right, my dear, replied my sister, and the best method to disarm envy, and a propensity to slander, is to reflect, that by indulging these passions, instead of lessening the merit of the envied person, we really injure our own, and render ourselves still more inferior; whilst by doing justice to
others,

others, we prove that similar virtues exist in our own breasts.

They who truly love virtue will rejoice in the number of her votaries—May I now ask you, my Charlotte, whether you intend to encourage the addresses of my brother?—I cannot think of my behaviour to him without confusion, resumed Miss Spendlove : Let me have time to wean my heart from every bad impression, and Mr. Frankly shall not find me insensible to his merit.—But I must intreat your permission, dear Madam, to pass some time with my cousin Bennett in the country, and that you will mention my design to Mr. Goodwill. I would be quite explicit to Mr. Frankly ; but I fear (if he is inclined to jealousy) the discovery might render him uneasy, and suspicious of my future conduct. I have rather injured myself than him. I will endeavour to do justice to both, and perhaps when my heart is more at ease, I may trust him without reserve.—Will you excuse me, Madam, if I dine from home to day ? My looks might else betray some extraordinary emotion—From Miss Goodwill I would not conceal my fault—Dearest Madam, my heart rejoices in its recovered purity of sentiments, but from conviction of its error, is diffident of its own steadiness.

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“ That diffidence, said my sister, will be your security, as too great confidence might have proved your ruin. I applaud and will assist your resolution. Believe me, an engagement with a man of real honour, and good sense, will secure you from any faulty attachment. Treat my brother with unre-served frankness, and his love will receive an additional support.—But somebody is coming up—If you chuse not to be seen, retire to my chamber. Miss Spendlove embraced her, and hiding her face with her handkerchief, left the room. My sister went down, and I quitted my concealment. I owned, however, to that dear woman, my motives for being a listener—The example of Miss Spendlove encourages her to hope my brother’s reformation. I asked her, how she supported such trials?—By trust, answered she, in that Providence, who never deserts the innocent, and who will recompence the sufferings he permits—“ These lines, added she, I find very applicable, though had the friend who wrote them been in my situation, she could not perhaps have expressed herself in this manner :

*While from the guilty source flows endless grief,
The pangs of virtuous love admit relief !*

*Superior to its woes, the soul will rise,
And seek a sure asylum in the skies !*

I must not forget to mention, that Lord Rovewell is obliged to attend a sick uncle in the country, from whom he has great expectations. I hope his absence will be favourable to my sister. My brother is now from home; but I flatter myself, my next Letter will convey some pleasing account.

Their re-union will scarcely afford more joy to you, than to

Your affectionate,

and obliged humble servant,

LUCY GOODWILL.

LETTER IX.

Lord ROVEWELL to Captain ALLMODE.

COULDST thou have imagined, Allmode, that a fellow so lively, so attached to pleasure as I am, could support a tedious confinement, to the sick room of an old wretch, whose recovery I dread, and whom I would hasten to the grave? But thou knowest my inducement. His lands, tenements,

ments, and hereditaments, will amply repay my attendance.—The farce is almost over—The last scene is opened to my view, and the curtain will soon drop.

By my faith, Ned, (you'll excuse the concise term) it will be some time, I doubt, before the risible muscles of my face will be capable of performing their functions—I have a happy faculty of adapting my appearance to persons and times. My uncle thinks me a saint—I fear, if *he* is destined to be one, he will have a very different opinion of his nephew—I could hasten his last moment, by acquainting him with my real character, and the swift circulation I shall make of those pretty pieces he has been so long collecting—But that would be dangerous work, ha! Ned—I have often thought it a happy circumstance the old Don lives so far from London. He would else hear strange stories of his *kinsman*—little akin, I doubt, in heart.

Prithee, good captain, take care of Goodwill; let me not lose my prey—I should be horridly disappointed, if he had more penetration. The fellow deserves to suffer for being a fool. Who but himself would have permitted so charming a creature as his wife, to be frequently seen by a hare-um scare-um Lord, mad in the pursuit of pleasure? You'll say,

say, he did not know my character. Character, simpleton! People seldom have occasion to make enquiries of noblemen at my time of life—Surely I am not worse than most of my age and rank—Do you think I am? That's some comfort, Ned! though I doubt that excuse would be insufficient with my uncle—Hardly do, I fancy—But I shall reform some time hence. Prithee tell me, whence is it, we are more ashamed of being weak than wicked?—But I must answer my own question for *your* information. Why, in the first place, weakness of understanding is ridiculed and despised, vice is countenanced, and softned by the name of gallantry: secondly, we believe we can be good when we please, but fear we cannot be wise when we wish—Remember this, captain. It is a more just observation, than you perhaps expected from me.

Hark ye, Ned! let not Goodwill be much at home—haunt him—suffer him not to *see* his wife, if possible; for I am terribly afraid my absence may prove destructive to my hopes. I believe he loves me—That rencounter at Fanny's lodgings, projected by me, and in which I appeared to be his defender, against an unequal assault, *I think*, has secured him. Yet how bitterly did he
lament

lament being seduced by that artful girl—The fault was mine. Far from being attracted by her beauty, he was disgusted at her immodest behaviour, and would have left her immediately, had not I prevented him. Wine and mirth dissipated grave reflections—Never will he forgive himself—And if he knew the use I intend to make of his conduct, he never could forgive me—It would increase his wretchedness.—He is ashamed to see his wife—The society I introduce him into, divert in some measure his attention from thoughts that almost distract him—The longer he continues in this course of life, the more difficult will it be to break the chain, which unites him to us—This from you, Rovewell! methinks I hear you say—Even so, Ned; I am not blind to reason, though she casts so dim a light into my breast; my ideas are rather confused.—

Pleasure, my boy, pleasure is my goddess! I have long bowed before her shrine, and she has not a more obsequious votry. I can't say she has sufficiently repaid my adorations; but hope enlivens me, disappointment cannot wholly dispirit me—This woman, this beautiful, this enchanting Clarinda, has occasioned me more uneasy moments than I ever felt before—She certainly thinks
not

not so well of me, as her husband does. A cold civility has been the best reception I *ever* experienced from her; but of late she deprives me even of this, and leaves the room immediately. I can't bear it, Ned—I, that doat upon the sex, to be treated in this manner by one, whom I prefer to all the rest. She is almost the only female, who has mortified my vanity. My conquests are indeed generally *too* easy—I have not the pleasure of surmounting a difficulty—Mrs. Goodwill seems to promise me much trouble; but I care not, if I can at last prove successful—She loves her husband, you say—She can't, surely. He is a stupid wretch, and not capable of love—When I mention the charms of her person, he launches out in praises of the beauties of her mind—When I admire the easy politeness of her behaviour, he cries, Oh! she is of an angelic disposition! Her mind, a fool! and to say this to a man, who cared not if she was an idiot, was she as kind as beautiful—Her disposition too! She is not of that compliable temper I wish her to be—Yet faith, I know not if I should adore an unanimated form; and perhaps, to that sweetness which smiles upon her features, they may owe great part of their enchanting loveliness. Shall I rob her of her
most

most engaging charm?—I know not whether I shall be able to subdue this haughty fair, but I will not resign my hopes. Besides I have another scheme.—But mum—you shall know nothing of it, unless I succeed.

The old gentleman is awaked, and calls me to him—Adieu! captain. Remember your instructions, and acquit yourself of this commission in a manner, that may entitle you to farther commands, from

General ROVEWELL.

L E T T E R X.

Lord ROVEWELL to Mr. GOODWILL.

Dear Goodwill,

THE greatest mortification I feel in being confined to the country, arises from my absence from you. I doubt you are not sufficiently sensible of this truth—You are become thoughtful, and even melancholy—Surely that foolish affair cannot *now* render you uneasy—Clear up, Charles—Disperse the clouds that overspread your brow, and let the sun of mirth shine forth again—Frequent our assembly—There, admiration waits you—All are prepared to applaud you—All-

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mode

mode will introduce you to the society, and supply my place : If *indeed* you consider yourself obliged to me, follow my advice, chase away desponding thoughts, and avoid company that will infect you.

I hear Frankly threatens me, for withdrawing you from home—But sure you have cast aside your leading-strings—or are you still a baby?—If so, confine yourself to the nursery—A *wife*, and puling infant, are fit company for a pusillanimous, meek-spirited husband—But you are more of a man—Shake off entirely the unnatural subjection—Exert yourself, and be master of your inclinations, and family.

Your wife has, I suppose, complained to her brother. Is this a proof of the duty, you think she so steadily practises?—No, no, Charles, she is but a woman—

Do not indulge thought—I shall soon be in town, and will put you in a method to become as gay and lively as

Your faithful

ROVEWELL.

L E T.

LETTER XI.

Mr. GOODWILL to Lord ROVEWELL.

OH! thou disturber of my peace! Will you still continue to torment me? Shall I never taste of happiness again? Take from me, then, that power of reflection, which only heightens my misery, by comparing the present with the past!—On the future, I hardly dare to turn my thoughts!

Good God! to what a society have I abandoned myself!—'Tis ever thus, when we deviate from virtue—The conversation of the good is painful to the guilty, and the newly entangled sinner endeavours to console himself, by mixing with the herd, who have been long enured to vice!—How have I fallen from the summit of earthly felicity, to a state below the dignity of a man!—What was my first fault? I became ashamed, I blushed, from a consciousness of having acted right, because the companions that diverted an idle hour, laughed at my scrupulous exactness.—I was ashamed of being happy—My wife—but I dare not think of her—'tis too painful a remembrance—Yet you presumed to insinuate that my Clarinda has betrayed me to her brother. 'Tis false, Rove-

well!—She is all perfection—Her soul is angelic purity—It is only her love for me, that proves her human. With a mind raised to heaven, by celestial meditation, her affection for me attaches her to earth. What a return have I made?—Oh! why did you save my life, when you had betrayed my honour? Not seduced by my own inclination, it was *your* barbarous triumph over my reason. For a moment I forgot my Clarinda!—No wonder then that I lost the remembrance of my duty!

Shall the hours of blissful conversation, shall the time of delightful reflection, never more be experienced?—Ah! no—riotous mirth, distracting thoughts, have usurped their place. Oh!—could I recal the past, I should be happy.

Would to God I had never known you! Why did you intrude on my unguarded, unsuspecting heart?—You was a witness of the happiness you have destroyed—But why do I blame you!—Forgive me, my Lord!—Ought I to have expected a stranger should preserve to me those delights *I* so carelessly neglected?—I had proved the sweets of the most perfect union, heaven ever sanctified. I had nothing more to wish—I wanted not a friend—My wife was my bosom friend—my companion—my guardian angel—A little cherub

rub had blessed us with increase of delight—What fiend influenced me, to seek for pleasure abroad, when I enjoyed the most exalted happiness at home? You, Lord Rovewell, you was the demon, who assumed an heavenly appearance, to tempt a weak wretch to the purposes of hell—I am almost distracted—I cannot think—Yet mention not my wife, as you have dared to mention her—When I wandered from my duty, I ceased to be a *man*, and became *weaker* than an infant. Surely I have laid aside my leading-strings, you say—No, Rovewell, you have *led* me to my destruction. I struggled awhile, but your superior cunning supplied the deficiency of strength, and I submitted at last to your guidance.

Why did I ever loosen the silken chain, that gently directed my steps in the path of virtue?—Shame and remorse pursue me—An injured wife, whose tears only have reproached me—An helpless infant, whose weakness demands my tenderness and protection—These dear objects awaken dreadful reflection, nor can all your boasted gaiety lull me again to forgetfulness.

Why must I be troubled with the impertinence of Allmode? I flattered myself, when you was absent, I should recover my peace—

But it will not be—Solitude can afford no tranquillity to a wretch, who banishes thought. He who enjoys it, must be able to look backward without self-reproach, and forward without apprehension. I can neither bear retirement, nor company—Your noisy society can only for a moment dispel my affliction—A constant cheerfulness in company reigns only in that well-regulated mind, which feels most happy in retirement. This *meek-spirited*, this *pufillanimous* husband, as you insultingly call me, is not a proper inmate of *that* nursery, to which you would confine him—That sweet abode of peace and innocence, will not harbour so unworthy a guest—The joy, that sparkles in my Clarinda's eyes, when she beholds me, the smiles of my little infant, upbraid me more cruelly than the severest reproaches.—I can scarcely support their sight—The looks of my sister express the heaviest resentment; and indeed she has more than hinted her displeasure. Mr. Frankly has gently expostulated with me—Have I reason to be angry?—Far, far otherwise—It is love for my wife, that influences *their* conduct, whilst *mine* appears actuated by a contrary motive; yet, could they know my heart, they would find it filled with the most sincere affection man ever felt—Why
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can I not disclose it—I am ashamed to own myself convinced of an error—Is it not so? Foolish wretch!—False-grounded shame! Ought I not rather to blush for a perseverance in guilt?—I will confide in that faithful bosom, which will perhaps communicate to me the serenity it enjoys, and calm my troubled soul—But you have said, it must not be—Take me, Allmode, hurry me from myself, if it be possible!—Why, Rowell, why did you preserve a life hateful to me, and which has destroyed the peace of others? If you would reconcile me to it, hasten to town, release me from those obligations which condemn me to wear an appearance of libertinism my soul abhors, and permit me to renounce the society whose manners shock me.

At present, there is not a wretch more miserable than

CHARLES GOODWILL.

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LET.

LETTER XII.

Miss GOODWILL to Mrs. FRANKLY,

I Was in hopes, dear Madam, I should have found many opportunities of conversing with my brother, but he has not afforded me one, and I fear the arch-fiend is returned—Yet I will not despair, tho' I see no means of redress.—Providence will effect the change, by some unforeseen event.

Miss Spendlove has left us, and is gone into the country. My brother willingly consented to her request, and I believe suspects not the occasion of her retirement. He must be a wretch indeed, to be capable of harbouring designs upon her honour.—She embraced my sister with the most friendly warmth, and received my brother's farewell compliment with very little emotion. She intreated my sister to write to her, and begged she would tell her of all her faults. "It is your duty, Madam, said she, with a smile—My guardian's wife must supply to me the place of my guardian; and you will *now* find a truly docile spirit in me."—A rising blush, and downcast look, expressed some disorder, but it was only momentary, and she went away with cheerfulness. —

Melan-

Melancholy subjects have of late wholly employed my pen—I will enliven *this* Letter with a digression, which will afford fresh matter for admiration of my amiable sister.

I don't know whether I ever mentioned to you a fantastical lady, who visits my sister, and seems greatly to desire her acquaintance, though I believe my brother's admiration is the real inducement—She is married to a worthy man, but is a mere coquet, and treats with contempt only that person of the other sex who most justly claims her love and esteem. Such a character, Madam, you are certain, cannot recommend itself to your daughter's approbation; but as my brother seemed pleased with her lively turn, my sister did not decline the visit, tho' she determined to contract no intimacy.

We went yesterday to her house, and were greatly astonished at the reception we met with, and at Mrs. Bellair's appearance—Her cap was half off her head, her hair dishevelled, her stays loosely tied round her, and her gown unpinned. Her eyes were swelled with weeping; yet her tears seemed to be the effusion of resentment, which still sparkled in her eyes, and her face glowed with passion.

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Our amazement keeping us silent, Dear creatures, said she (raising herself from a couch, on which she reclined when we entered) this is very kind; but I am ashamed to be seen by you in such a dishabille; yet as I did not expect company, you will think it excusable.—

I hope you are well, Madam, answered my sister; for this disorder in your dress and looks makes me apprehensive for you. Oh! child, cried Mrs. Bellair, I have had *such* a lecture this morning! Would you believe it? Mr. Bellair has been accusing me of wasting time in dress, when I am to appear in public, and neglecting even neatness and decency, when in my own house free from company.—Can any thing be so unreasonable as he is? Does he think I will spoil my cloaths, dirty my linen, and employ my time in adorning myself to *please a husband*? Preposterous! Of what importance is it to me to appear agreeable in *his* eyes? He tells me, I am not the same woman, to whom he paid his addresses—But he should be sensible we then both acted a part, and that now the assumed character is laid aside—Would not a reasonable man be pleased to have his wife admired, flattered, idolized, by every pretty fellow?—How could the antiquated notions of *neatness* and *decency* enter his head? A fine Lady
is

is not confined to the rules of the vulgar!
 —*Neatness* and *decency* may be proper enough for tradesmen's wives; but the polite break through those narrow limits—A groveling wretch! He has protested, I shall no more attend public places, unless I will be careful of my appearance at home. What can be more mortifying? To dress for an *husband*! What person of fashion ever did such a thing?
 —Here her tears interrupted her discourse; and my sister excited in her equal surprize with that she had inspired in us, by saying, Will you forgive me, Madam, if my opinion dissents from yours? But I beg your pardon, you are certainly in jest when you say, you only acted a part; for your good sense must convince you it is still necessary to keep up the *assumed* character, as you call it, unless you wish to destroy domestic harmony.—Mr. Bellair has a right to expect your utmost endeavours to please him, and it ought to be your highest happiness—I am sure you will find it of the *greatest importance* to preserve his regard—

A right! Mrs. Goodwill, interrupted the enraged Lady; I know not what you mean!
 —This is quite new doctrine—What, is he to controul *me*?—To lay down rules for my dress, company, &c. and am I to submit

mit to his imperial will and pleasure? No—he shall know my spirit is not to be subdued; and if he persists in his attempts to contradict me, it will occasion a scene of altercation, which may not perhaps conduce to his advantage.—

You may possibly think, Madam, replied my sister, our short acquaintance does not authorize my freedom; but I assure you, real concern for your neglected happiness influences me. Can you think that this state of altercation is conformable to the design of the marriage institution?—Do you delight to render uneasy a person, to whom you have solemnly *vowed* an obedience, your love should also dictate? What can you mean by this conduct? For my own part, I can truly say, I know no happiness equal to that which arises from contributing to my husband's satisfaction. My love and duty are entirely conciliated.

Duty! Obedience! cried Mrs. Bellair; Well, for a sensible woman, I never heard any one talk so absurdly. I did not marry to *obey*, but to command. The men indeed foolishly expect *obedience* from us, and why? Because they considered only their own gratification, and chose to make a law, which is inconsistent with reason. Let me ask you a question—

Do

Do *you* receive from your husband the return of gratitude, you may expect, for your submission?—My sister struggled to disperse a little appearance of confusion—Indeed, Mrs. Bellair, answered she, with amazing composure, I act not from an interested motive, which however laudable, might, if unsuccessful, occasion an alteration of conduct—But Mr. Goodwill's esteem and affection repay my tenderness—

Ah! Mrs. Goodwill, Mrs. Goodwill, said Mrs. Bellair, with an eagerness which expressed triumph, report says otherwise; and I am afraid with certainty—Why do you conceal his folly? And why do you, Madam, answered my sister, with unusual warmth, suggest to me a suspicion, which in a jealous breast, would soon arise to conviction? It is most ungenerous! 'Tis cruel!—Was Mr. Goodwill really forgetful of his duty, by ignorance alone, I could preserve a state of tranquillity—Who would officiously withdraw a veil, which conceals a spectacle of horror?—If I was even conscious of such a misfortune, it would be a shocking addition to it, that a fault should be disclosed to the world, which I would wish to bury in oblivion—Mr. Goodwill is supported by the dictates of religion, and directed by the influence of an excellent heart.

heart.—I shall think those, who attempt to excite my jealousy, envy my happiness—

Well, interrupted Mrs. Bellair, we are not likely to agree in our sentiments. I have no notion of these refinements—Let *me* be flattered, let me enjoy the delightful satisfaction of shining in the drawing-room, at the play, and ball, and I willingly resign the *pleasure* of gratifying my *husband's* inclinations. I enjoy teasing him—We differ in every particular, but in the choice of separate amusements—Indeed, the man is not avaricious, and *you* perhaps might think him reasonable in his demands. But *I* can't bear contradiction. *I will* not—

Take care, Madam, cried my sister: remember this observation, which is, I think, necessary to be inculcated ;

*That follies, when indulged, will still increase ;
And slightest quarrels wound domestic peace.*

Oh ! dear Madam, returned the other, you are infinitely kind. Permit me to return a piece of advice—Try to awaken your husband's jealousy, by encouraging some admirer's passion—Mrs. Goodwill's beauty *claims* universal adoration, and when Mr. Goodwill finds himself singular in his neglect of you, I do not doubt but you will regain his affection

fection—No, Madam, answered my amiable sister; was I as miserable as you think me, I would not be so guilty as you desire me to be—I would not part from the conscious integrity of my heart, even to recover my husband's love which you insinuate is lost—A woman, who preserves her husband's esteem, may flatter herself with the hope of being re-established in his love; but when esteem is lost, affection cannot be secured. But I find, Madam, this conversation has been carried too far—We will therefore take leave—which we did with little ceremony.

What say you, Madam, to this woman? Is she not a despicable creature? I suppose she wished to deprive my sister of the resource of conscious innocence; and perhaps she wants to detach my brother from his wife, that she may secure him by her attractions. My sister's virtue and circumspection baffled her designs. But the conduct of the one is as much beneath criticism, as the sentiments and behaviour of the other are superior to all praise.

I am happy in my alliance to such merit, and earnestly wish she had not reason to lament it. Permit me to add, that I have an high degree of satisfaction in subscribing

myself an admirer and imitator of your virtue, and

Your faithful

LUCY GOODWILL.

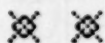
L E T T E R XIII.

Mr. FRANKLY to Mrs. FRANKLY.

Honoured Madam,

I Suspected a misfortune, of which I am now convinced—I dreaded an explanation, which yet I wished to hasten—Oh! Madam, my brother is become my rival in Miss Spendlove's heart—Yet do not imagine, he attempted to supplant me—perhaps I may still be happy—Miss Spendlove has left town, with a design to subdue entirely that passion, which I am certain my sister has shewn her in its proper light. The conduct of both have increased my love and esteem. I found my sister alone, the day on which the eclairsissement happened—She mentioned Charlotte's intention, and that she could not see me before her departure. I asked the reason—You cannot, said I, blame my uneasiness, and are too generous to defend Miss Spendlove's behaviour—Why does she refuse to see me? I have had a long conversation with her, answered

swered my sister; she acknowledges her faulty conduct, and intreats you will improve the time of her absence, by banishing from your mind the remembrance of her errors, in the treatment of you. She promises to receive you, at her return, as a deservedly-favoured lover. You delight me, dear sister, cried I, by this information! Forget her errors! She has none to forsake! Why should she retire? Permit her, my brother, she kindly answered, to pursue the dictates of her reason. Solitude will assist reflection, and render her truly worthy your love and esteem.—I submit, replied I; *your* judgment aids her resolution: I am happy in this assurance of her sensibility in my favour, which it shall be the study of my life to deserve.—But amidst the emotions of delight you occasion, I feel one very painful. *You* are not happy—My brother is unkind.—Hush, interrupted she, to be a friend to me, you must not indulge a thought that reflects dishonour on my husband—Excellent woman!



Miss Spendlove shall not see me yet—I will not invade her retirement. Sacred to me shall be the retreat of innocence!—I have long pitied her, for admitting and encouraging a passion, of which she knew not the

E source,

source. Contrary to a military plan of action, she must fly from her enemy, to gain a victory. Solitude and reflection will confirm her triumph—I shall be happy—My sister's misfortune too claims my stay; but I know not how to assist her—Mr. Goodwill is seldom at home, yet if I can judge by the observations I have time to make, something is working in his mind which will restore her peace—I dare interpose no farther, lest I destroy his purpose, and offend my sister.

Be assured I will always perform the duty of an affectionate brother, a sincere friend, and never cease to prove myself,

Your dutiful son

and faithful humble servant,

HENRY FRANKLY,

L E T.

LETTER XIV.

Captain ALLMODE to Lord ROVEWELL.

My Lord,

AS I assisted you during your absence from town, I expect you will bear with my impertinence, and even facilitate my scheme by your advice—A new scene opens—The characters are, Miss Forest, an amiable young lady, sole heiress to 30,000*l.* and Captain Allmode, a fellow who dresses well, talks fashionably, and has made conquests of half the women in town. Don't be jealous, my Lord—Their purses, and an *appearance* of regard, are all I aim at the possession of—The former, you know, my circumstances will not suffer me to neglect—The latter, absolutely contents my *love*. But to return—Now I have acquainted you with the persons of the drama, you will be glad to know the plot—Duce take me—I have a poor head for schemes—But this *must* succeed.—

The day after I came into the country I accidentally met this lady on a visit—She is really handsome, and her dress, though not fashionable, I must confess is very becoming—She gave me a proof of her under-

standing by distinguishing me, in a particular manner, from the boors, who were present. I enquired into her fortune, had a satisfactory account, and was not discouraged by hearing she has formed her expectation of a lover from romances—A sort of reading to which I never applied—Nor to any study you will say, but how to support the ornaments of dress. Her father is a clergyman, who married a woman of very large fortune, and she left only this child. Mr. Forest's character somewhat allayed my assurance of success; but a servant, whom I found means to corrupt, informed me, her lady's affections can only be gained by respectful assiduities, and that to conceal my *love*, will be the most certain method to meet with a return. By the contrivance of this maid I have sometimes privately seen the fair Henrietta, and have so well improved my opportunities, that she regards me with all the complacency I can expect—I ran over the whole vocabulary of Cupid's inspirations—I told her, all nature wore its brightest aspect, when she appeared—that the envious roses blush to find themselves so far excelled by the bloom on her cheeks, and the coral in her lips—That her eyes eclipsed the lustre of the sun, that the zephyrs pressed to steal
a kiss,

a kiss, that——but I cannot repeat all the nonsense with which I have assailed her heart. You'll laugh at this short sketch of my courtship——

I have had a great deal of trouble—I have sat up three or four nights reading the Grand Cyrus, Clelia, Cleopatra, and Cassandra. Did not her fortune incite me, this girl had never tasted the satisfaction of receiving from me an heroic address. Next week her father carries her to town, where his attendance is required to adjust a law-suit. I shall precipitate an explanation, lest her fortune should raise me any formidable rivals. Her father, you will tell me, may render my hopes abortive, by refusing to resign this fortune—Why truly, my Lord, I should be rather fearful of consequences (for *a wife* is to me an unnecessary appendix); but my rural lass has 10,000*l.* independant, left by an uncle. This will enable me to support her father's resentment, if the old curmudgeon is inflexible.

But I must conclude abruptly; for I have several tedious pages of Artamenes to turn over.

You shall soon receive another Letter from,

Your's sincerely,

EDWARD ALLMODE.

L E T T E R X V .

Lord ROVEWELE to Captain ALLMODE.

IF the lovesick Oroondates can awhile forbear to gaze on the bright eyes of the divine Statira, if, on withdrawing his view of those celestial luminaries, he is not involved in the mists of darkness, an humble swain requests him to peruse this epistle!—I cannot proceed—but that will do for thee, Ned—I wrote it merely for thy instruction—Why what an army hast thou to encounter! “Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimeras dire.”—So this fair one is intrenched behind a huge column of massy folios. Wilt thou find sufficient food to maintain the siege?—This kind of employ is quite new to thee—Well, thanks to the god of love, I have nothing to read, but the minds of my charmers; and obscure books, let me tell you, I sometimes find them, for there are so many editions, with considerable alterations, and no emendations, that I am frequently at a loss to trace the meaning: But it is much easier than to encounter thy adversaries.—Mercy on us, Ned! What a wild-goose chase art thou entered upon. Thou wilt find it much
more

more difficult to obtain this 30,000 l. than Oroondates or Artaban did to vanquish the same number of men. What an invention had Mademoiselle Scudery, &c. ! It is pity their pens were not employed to delineate real life.

Now to my own affairs, which, by the bye, Ned, you had not grace to mention—Not a word of consolation to a poor fellow, who stands so much in need of it—Thy *love* (prostituted word, but thou hast *distinguished* it) absorbed all thy thoughts—It was *love*, captain, of thyself that engrossed thee—I am horridly out of humour with my old gentleman—To be confined to his sick room so long, for no purpose—agreeable to me—I fear my presence hastened his recovery—Then, to be forced to congratulate his return of health, at which all my hopes sickened.—I hurried up to town on pretence of business, and left the old usurer to add to the golden hoard.—

I have scarcely seen Goodwill—I met his sister in company yesterday, where you was mentioned—What an odd compound, said she, is captain Allmode—He is a fop, yet not devoid of wit—Indeed he has so much, that when he converses only with his own sex, one would not suspect he pays such attention

to his pretty person ; but when with our's, he shews, that in his own perfections all his happiness centers, and that he estimates the understanding of others, by the approbation they shew to him.

Thou *art* an odd fellow, Ned!—I think the girl judges too favourably of thee ; for I have frequently thought, and called thee an insignificant puppy—Perhaps it is vanity that makes me assume an appearance of regard for thee, and some other insects of thy tribe—a desire to shew my own superiority—Thou hast too much vanity, and art too well acquainted with my *sincerity*, to suspect me of truth.—Well—be it as it may—I believe we are equally capable of real friendship—I don't flatter you, captain—Write again—perhaps I may answer your letter—But if not, you know it is your duty to obey—And to encourage you, I will confess, I believe I *really* feel some affection for you—When the Arcadian plains surrender up their guest, you may possibly be again serviceable to

Your

ROVEWELL.

LET-

L E T T E R X V I .

Captain ALLMODE to Lord ROVEWELL.

YOUR letter, my Lord, does not prove your disappointment, so much as your independance. None but a man of your fortunes, could write with that elegant spirit, that flowing negligence—You don't seem to want consolation; yet I beg pardon for my forgetfulness.—

Matters here go on swimmingly—The little rustic is my own—Apropos—I have purchased a new suit. The trimming is rich, and the colour well fancied—My rogue of a taylor refused me credit, 'till I assured him, I was on the brink of marriage with a very rich heiress—No more hesitation, you may believe—But, what a lover thou art, methinks I hear you say, to make so quick a transition from the conquest of a blooming fair-one, to embroidery, and a new coat—Perhaps, with Miss Goodwill, you may think me too much of a fop—But a well-fancied suit, my Lord, has more effect than you may imagine, on the heart of every woman, even where the predominant passion is *not* vanity, which reigns supreme in the
hearts

hearts of most of the sex—I believe my fair romancer is not insensible to this kind of merit. Dress is the study of the sex, and they are pleased with the taste of their lover—I am a happy man, my Lord—The frowns of beauty cannot disconcert me, nor her smiles transport me beyond the bounds of reason. In the former case, I condemn her want of judgment, and in the latter, am only exalted into an higher opinion of my own merit—an ingenuous confession, and which *hardly* contradicts Miss Goodwill's observation.

I shall soon bid an entire adieu to want and a shabby outside, and *secure* the habiliments of beau-etry—Did I tell you, Mr. Forest is a clergyman? He is, faith! and if he suspected me, would most probably read me a lecture, for he is a very eloquent advocate for the true cause—'pon my honour, my Lord, he talks well; yet on *this* subject, he would not gain his accustomed admiration.

You have sent me a fine specimen of your knight-errantry—I am sometimes at a loss—My memory is deficient—I have read enough to furnish me with materials for gaining all the romantic girls in Christendom—But such absurdity—Oh Lud!

that I could but obtain 30,000 l. by any other means——Henrietta might bless some more worthy swain with her regard——But the time of meeting draws near, and I have not sufficiently conned my lesson. I am vapoured with the thoughts of my task. Adieu, my Lord——I believe I shall throw up my commission, *when I marry*. For 'tis a disagreeable circumstance to be subjected to the commands of a superior officer——Yet on reflection I may be glad of a pretence to quit my wife——A golden chain will not reconcile me to the loss of liberty——What can sound more shocking than *the marreid*

NED ALLMODE?

LET-

L E T T E R XVII.

Mrs. GOODWILL to Miss SPENDLOVE.

YOU desired me, my dear, to write to you with the utmost freedom, and urged, that it is my duty to supply the place of your guardian. You requested I would tell you all your faults—So ingenuous a confession as you have made, seems to exempt you from the necessity of farther advice. But as you appear desirous I should confirm your good resolutions, and have entertained some dangerous prejudices, I *do* think it my duty to comply with your request. I must be obliged to use repetition; but as at the time I first gave my advice, your disposition was not susceptible of any influence from it, so from the change in your sentiments, I am certain you will *now* not only accept it with a proper regard, but find it too little familiar, to fatigue your attention.

You may recollect, my dear, that soon after you came to town, you appeared charmed with the history of the princess of Cleves. You pitied her, for having entertained a passion destructive to her repose, applauded the behaviour
of

of her husband, and admired the perfections of the duke de Nemours.—What imaginary charms deluded that princess?—Did his personal accomplishments evince their possessor to be adorned with virtues deserving her esteem? And ought those external beauties, or even his fancied mental endowments, to render her forgetful of her duty, and her husband's merit?—No, my Charlotte; she indulged the destructive passion, 'till she believed herself incapable of subduing it—Be assured, there is no irregular emotion, which may not be suppressed—No vicious passion, which religion will not enable us to conquer. You called her love disinterested—A pure Platonic flame.—I confess, she considered not her own *true interest*; but is this neglect praise-worthy? A Platonic flame is generally mixed with drossy particles—True purity is uniform, and consistent—It encourages no dangerous sentiment—Her's was false heroism——The only true heroine is she, who resists the approaches of guilt, whatever shape it assumes, however flattering its appearance.

When you read the poem of Eloisa to Abelard, with what an enthusiastic warmth did you repeat these lines, in which the true female tenderness and delicacy are lost in the

the wild fallies of an unlimited and unlawful passion.

*Not Cæsar's emprefs would I deign to prove ;
No, make me mistress to the man I love :
If there be yet another name more free,
More fond than mistress, make me that to thee.
Ob ! happy state, when souls each other draw,
When love is liberty, and nature, law !*

You added, that you thought it no crime to live in the strictest connection with a man, with whom you had exchanged mutual vows, though the ceremony of marriage had not passed. I answered in the manner I judged most likely to eradicate such an opinion ; but a toss of your head, and an utter inattention to my discourse, convinced me, my remonstrances would prove ineffectual. I will therefore repeat them—Will you permit, me my dear, said I, not only to dissuade you from disclosing sentiments, which have a bad tendency, but to influence the regulation of them in your own breast—You say, *form* is not essential to constitute an union—I grant you, that vows, however secretly plighted, are regarded by the Almighty, and registered in heaven ; but as the Deity is interested, not only in the good of individuals, but of mankind

kind in general, whoever is regardless of laws, wisely calculated, to promote the virtue and peace of society, transgresses the divine intention.—If your affection, continued I, and that of your lover is sincere, you will rejoice to confirm your union, by the approbation, and in the presence of the world—Consider, that by the disregard of human laws, you influence others to the imitation of your neglect. The libertine, whose oaths are prostituted to every woman he thinks worthy his attention, considers not that the insincerity of those oaths is displeasing to God, and his example prejudicial to the world, but will plead your opinion in defence of his practice.—Thus the innocent victim of designing villany receives contempt, even from the gentle sex, for being influenced by sentiments, which her undistinguishing mind adopted.—If regardless of his vows, the contracted lover proves perjured, where will that forsaken fair-one fly for pity, who was insensible to the miseries, of which her conduct might be productive to others?—Dr. Hawkesworth, in his *Adventurer*, judiciously observes, in order to awaken men from the sloth of an inactive state, “that no life can be pleasing to God, which is not useful to man ;” and illustrates this truth by an elegant eastern tale.

Shall

Shall then a creature dare to act in defiance, of the designs of his Creator? Ought we to disregard human ordinances, which, as they were instituted for public utility, receive the sanction of the Deity?—No, my dear, you infringe the duty of christian benevolence, by thinking lightly of ceremonies, which cement the virtue, and happiness, of social intercourse.

—Remember, my Charlotte, that the breach of private vows is criminal, and remember too, that no union is confirmed by the sanction of the Almighty, in which divine and human laws are not conciliated.—Now I am upon this subject, I will write *all* that is upon my mind—But think not, my dear, that I affect, and wish to acquire the character of wisdom—I only mean to support that of a real friend—You *may act* from the influence of sentiments, which *appear* to you laudable. A gravity unusual at an early time of life, has induced me to consider many opinions, and instilled into my mind sentiments, which may escape the observation of a more lively disposition—The constant lessons of prudence and virtue, I have received from the best of mothers, were inculcated still more forcibly by her practice.—You, my dear, had not this advantage—But you know me for your friend—You intreat my advice—

It may be useful to you, and I will proceed without farther apology.

Why did you so severely condemn the frailty of Miss Heartfree?—Bred up in luxury, and never pinched by the cold hand of want, she was terrified at its appearance, and saw no alternative, but to submit to poverty; or to preserve the splendid trappings of modern prodigality, by relinquishing the sweets of innocence.—Her fears prevailed, and she was miserable. The evil she attempted to shun, still haunted her—Again affrighted, she again became guilty, and is now the wretched victim of that sex by whom she was adored.—Tell me, my dear, do not the circumstances that betrayed her, *somewhat* alleviate the heinousness of her guilt?—Yet you condemned her without mercy—*You*, who inconsiderately asserted, it is no breach of duty to despise the loss of character, to violate human laws, and who would carelessly hazard the infection of others by the poison of your example. Know, my dear, that no person can too strictly repel the slightest attacks of vice, nor can any one with too much moderation condemn the conduct of others.—Be rigidly severe in self-examination, but soften the asperity of judgment on others faults.—Suspend

F

your

your belief, and if unwillingly you receive conviction of their guilt, let the tear of pity be dropped for the weakness of human nature.—Still preserve a disposition to believe that were the motives and circumstances known, the error might justly claim more compassion, than resentment—Never boast of your penetration in discerning the misconduct of another.—It is more frequently the proof of a bad heart, than of a distinguishing head.—If you are free from the fault of your acquaintance, does not some other failing render you equally culpable?—Resolve to be perfect yourself, before you become a censor on the actions of others; and believe me, those who are nearest perfection, will always be found capable of the most exalted tenderness and compassion.—Thankful to the Deity for assisting their perseverance, they neither feel their vanity raised, nor their severity excited by comparison with the fallibility of others.

We make it the substance of our daily prayer, that God would forgive us *our* trespasses, *as we forgive them, who trespass against us*; let us beware, lest we render this address our condemnation,

Soon

Soon after the sad story of Miss Heartfree was publickly known, you commenced an acquaintance with several of both sexes, who were persons I very much disliked—Your gaiety led you to converse with them, in a manner that shocked me—Their discourse was not calculated to please the chaste ear, yet you listened, you answered with a smile or repartee, and even *introduced* subjects on which a modest woman should have declined speaking.—Is this the young lady, I could not help secretly saying, who severely condemned Miss Heartfree's crime?—If “from the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh,” who can acquit Miss Spendlove, when the unhappy Miss Heartfree is blamed?—Ought *she* to censure vice, who authorizes it by her freedom of conversation?—Can *she* stem the torrent of licentiousness, who admits into her company the dregs of society?—

As I have since told you, A fancied security often betrays into real danger——

You may remember, I insisted on your declining these visits. You pouted, and told me, you saw no harm in innocent gaiety at your time of life—Nor I, my dear, answered I; but you affix improperly the term *innocent*.

I am a great friend to chearfulness, it is agreeable to every season of life—I wish to promote it, and to render you happy with me; but *my* duty and *your* interest forbid my indulging you, where that indulgence would be blameable—Your silence and discontent prevented my saying more; and as you complied with my request, without farther murmuring, I never resumed the subject.—I will now add, that no conversation, nor entertainment, can deserve the name of rational or *innocent* gaiety, where they are not founded on strict delicacy, and supported by truth—Let not the votaries of virtue swerve from her dictates, for they know not what evils may succeed the slightest deviation. Indelicacy of sentiment more easily insinuates itself into the heart, concealed under the specious name of gaiety, than when it borrows no mask to hide its natural deformity—We cannot act with too much circumspection—Though innocence is often less careful to preserve appearances than real guilt; yet to despise the loss of reputation, frequently proves the destruction of virtue—A regard to reputation is sometimes the sole support against a criminal indulgence—but I wish *your* conduct to be founded on more noble and consistent motives.

Thus

Thus much, my dear, I have ventured to write, in compliance with your desire of reproof—An office which, however disagreeable, is an act of friendship—Our enemies *will censure* us, and their sincerity may always be rendered beneficial, while the ill-judged silence of friends deceives us.—It is the part of the latter, tenderly to expostulate with us, to probe our wounds, and by the lenient power of friendship, restore our minds to a state of health—You was ignorant of the nature of your disorder—I have awakened you from a delusive slumber—You disapproved, from motives of prudence, my brother's lodging in the same house with you, yet you examined not the motives that induced you to stay with me, whom you disliked—Observe, my dear, how inconsistent are our actions, when not submitted to the guidance of virtue!—With a true greatness of mind you acknowledge your mistake, and resolve to correct the imperceptible wandering of your heart.—You have promised to fix it on a man truly sensible of its value, and who will repay your affection by unwearied endeavours to promote your happiness. applaud your penitence, I admire your resolution, and I love your sincerity.

You will think, perhaps, it is easier to advise than to practise—Alas! my dear, I am convinced it is—I am not without my trials—May I be enabled to support them properly!—But no more of that—If you approve my sentiments, consider not whether they *would* influence my practice, but whether they *ought* to do so.

My sister desires me to assure you of her approbation and love, and to depend on her inviolable secrecy. I hope it is *unnecessary* to add, that I shall banish from my remembrance every unfavourable Idea, and nourish in my breast that part of your conduct which entitles you to general esteem, and secures to you the friendship of

Your faithful and affectionate

CLARINDA GOODWILL.

L E T-

LETTER XVIII.

Miss SPENDLOVE to Mrs. GOODWILL.

Dearest Madam,

I Would not defer one moment answering your Letter, lest you should imagine I am offended with the dictates of the most exalted friendship—How just, yet how gentle are your reproofs! Surely you are a spirit, descended from the celestial regions, to purify the minds of mortals. While with superior acuteness you penetrate into the recesses of the heart, you view with the tenderest sensibility the misfortunes occasioned by our errors.

Oh! Madam, why cannot I *express* my gratitude?—I can only tell you, it equals your goodness.—How nobly does your practice evince the truth of your assertion, “that those nearest perfection are most capable of exalted tenderness and compassion.” You have acquired a right to censure infirmities from which you are entirely free: Yet how tenderly—But you are *all perfection*.

I have often blamed myself, on reflection, for the indulgence which at the time I thought

innocent. Mirth and delicacy are certainly not inconsistent, yet how frequently have I banished the one, when I indulged the other!—How many characters have suffered by my misrepresentations? I must plead guilty to every article you have mentioned. It would be too tedious to repeat them; I rely on my heavenly judge, and earthly benefactress, whose clemency will equal the sincerity of my repentance.

How happy am I, that you discovered me to myself! I had often asked my heart, why it was so insensible to your goodness, which I could not help acknowledging? Why it was so favourably disposed to Mr. Goodwill, who was less kind than you? I sighed at the retrospect, yet still imagined my dislike the effect of your severe virtue—Before you entered my room, on your truly benevolent design, I was startled with the sentiments of Emily Jervois. I became conscious of my own, and was ashamed of my misconduct.—I imagined every person must suspect me, and was shocked at the reflection.—I dare not affirm my repentance was then sincere—How often do we impose on ourselves!—Fear of discovery agitated my soul—I wished I had never seen Mr. Goodwill; but, perhaps,

haps, this wish proceeded rather from the dread of losing my character, than a proper conviction of my fault. I dare not assure you, my reflections would have eradicated my passion, tho' they inspired an earnest desire to conceal it.—Had not your penetration discovered me, perhaps I had applauded my own cunning, forgot I was in an error, and have persevered in it.

You will be surprized, that a woman who contemned human laws, should be so fearful of incurring censure for a breach of this institution—But though I despised the *ceremonious* part of your contract, I was sensible your engagement was sacred, from your mutual vows, and that it was sanctified by the approbation of God. I knew that the world would think me criminal, for being the cause of your disunion.—I imagined, I could live happy with Mr. Goodwill, as a friend.—I determined never to marry, and I believed myself a penitent, when I find I rather considered the gratification of my love, than the triumph of my virtue and reason—You, Madam, have restored me to both! I am now calm, pleased with myself, and with every object around me.—I esteem Mr. Goodwill, but I love him no longer.—I begin to be truly

truly sensible of Mr. Frankly's merit, and to hope it will be in my power to reward it. For you, Madam, my heart feels *inexpressible* sentiments!—I submit to your prudence, whether *you* will acquaint Mr. Frankly with my error, or whether I shall convince him of my sincerity, by an unreserved confidence.—Whatever you think best, must be right.—I cannot conclude without once more intreating you to believe, that no heart can more truly feel the sentiments of love, gratitude, esteem and admiration, than that of

Your most obliged and affectionate

CHARLOTTE SPENDLOVE.

P. S. Please to present my love and acknowledgments to your sister.

L E T.

LETTER XIX.

Mrs. GOODWILL to Miss SPENDLOVE.

YOUR Letter, my dear Miss Spendlove, confirms me in my good opinion of your understanding and virtue.—It is only a great mind that will acknowledge, with gratitude, reproof is just.—A mean soul will defend, rather than own a mistake.—It resents accusations it is not ashamed to deserve, and instead of atoning for a past error, incurs fresh guilt, by rejecting the admonitions of friendship. I congratulate you, on your happy change—Persevere, my love, and you will secure eternal felicity—Think not, that farther care is unnecessary—Your resolution is assisted by solitude and reflection, but it may be less firm, when assaulted by the seducing pleasures of gay company and town amusements.—Do not attribute perfection to mortals—I, my dear, am but the *instrument* of your conversion—To the Almighty you owe gratitude, thankfulness, adoration, and obedience—Let neither business, nor pleasure, render you forgetful of your duty—God does not extend his grace to those who depend

depend *wholly* on him without the exertion of their own powers; nor will he assist any who rely entirely on their strength.—It is our constant endeavour to do good and resist evil, that can alone entitle us to divine assistance.

You ask my advice, how to behave to my brother.—My dear friend, treat him with unreserved confidence. I will answer for him, you never will have reason to repent an ingenuous confession.—I told him I had received a Letter from you, and that I thought his paying you a visit would not be disagreeable.—Perhaps you will blame me for being so explicit; but believe me, after having contemptuously behaved to a man of sense and true honour, and he preserves a good opinion of you, 'tis false delicacy to be ashamed of acknowledging, you think justly of his merit.—But I beg pardon for a suspicion, which I believe injures you.—The knowledge of your sentiments will convince my brother, that no improper bias continues to influence you, but that your reason and virtue triumph, and that a love, founded on esteem, pleads in his favour.

Be assured I shall rejoice, when an union with him gives me a right to subscribe myself *y^{ur} sister*; though that alliance cannot add

add to the regard with which I am, my dear Miss Spendlove,

Most faithfully yours,

CLARINDA GOODWILL.

LETTER XX.

Mr. FRANKLY to Mrs. GOODWILL.

My dearest Sister,

IT is not in the power of love, though I am happy in Miss Spendlove's affection, to render me forgetful of what I owe to friendship. You desired me to acquaint you with the particulars of my reception.

Mrs. Bennet met me at the door, and conducted me to her husband's study. He received me very kindly.—My cousin, said Mrs. Bennet, is just returned from a walk, and gone up to her chamber; but I will inform her of your arrival, and conduct her to the parlour.—I waited for her there—Some minutes passed before she appeared—At last I heard her voice on the stairs; my heart fluttered—I opened the door, and she entered with a most becoming air of diffidence. A gentle confusion glowed on her charming cheek. Her eyes were modestly cast down.

After

After the first compliments, Mr. Frankly, said she, in a timorous accent, I am really ashamed to see you—I have a confession to make which embarrasses me—Dear Madam, cried I, hastily interrupting her, let me not be the occasion of a moment's uneasiness—Say no more.—You are too generous, answered she; but you shall not divert my purpose. I have treated you, Mr. Frankly, in a manner unsuitable to your merit, and unworthy of my own character. My heart was fatally prepossessed, and I wished to disengage myself from addresses which I esteemed persecution. Do you not despise me when I acknowledge it was—your brother Goodwill whom I loved?—But you must have observed my infatuation. I thank you, Sir, for the continuance of your regard. The hopes of my recovery from this delirium, doubtless sustained your affection.

Your amiable, your angelic sister discovered to me, and cast a true light on, the criminal inclination I had insensibly encouraged. 'Till she shewed me my error, I considered my emotions as the effects of a gratitude not only innocent but laudable. A gratitude to which I was an enthusiast!—I determined never to entertain an affection for any other man, lest it should lessen my proper sense of

my guardian's goodness.—Fool! that I was—
Had I strictly examined my heart, to what
cause could I have attributed my dislike to
Mrs. Goodwill, whose virtues were conspi-
cuous to all, even to that person who be-
held them with an invidious eye—Virtues, in-
finitely superior to Mr. Goodwill's.—I was
not shocked at his ingratitude to his wife,
but I was unhappy in his absence.—I ad-
mired not her fortitude, but I envied her
amiable qualities. Nay, Sir, pursued she,
perceiving my intention to speak, do not at-
tempt to interrupt me. You must be ac-
quainted with my former sentiments, that
you may congratulate my happy change—To
convince you of my sincere penitence, I will
shew you the Letters which have passed be-
tween your sister and me, by which means I
shall relieve your generosity from the pain
my confession gives you, and satisfy my own
heart by an ingenuous confidence. She then
withdrew, after desiring me to excuse her ab-
sence a few minutes.

I should receive from you the imputation
of flattery, was I to inform you with what
admiration of your sentiments I perused your
Letters.—My esteem is heightened by them
—How can my brother be insensible!—But

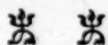
I in-

I intreat your pardon—I will not offend you.—

My love for Miss Spendlove is confirmed and increased. After I had finished the Letters, I stept into the garden—Miss Spendlove soon joined me. She looked somewhat confused—I expressed my admiration and increased affection in the warmest terms, but which did not do justice to my love. I mentioned you as a glorious example to your sex.—I intreated her to think no more of the past, but to fix my happy day. Mr. Frankly, answered she blushing, it shall be the endeavour of my future life, to render yours happy; but do not request an early time. I left town rather abruptly. It is known I have used you ill—Let it also be known that I have encouraged your address, and consented to be yours. I hope the world does not suspect the motive of my conduct; yet if it does, the alteration in my sentiments will not only console *me* for its censures, but, I flatter myself, will prevent a decrease in *your* tenderness.—Mr. and Mrs. Bennet joined us, before I had time for an answer. The former insisted on my giving him my company to-morrow to Lord ****'s fine seat; which is, you know, within a few miles—Nay, continued he, observing me

look

look at Miss Spendlove, I will not part from you. My cousin's prudery shall not force me to turn a guest from my house. I have long known and admired your character; and for your sister, give me leave to tell you, Mr. Frankly, I had rather be related to her than to the greatest Lord in christendom.—I assure you, cousin, replied Miss Spendlove, smiling, I have no desire to rob you of Mr. Frankly's company. It would be prudery indeed to send him to an inn, or to wish to hasten his return to town, when he comes so far to see us.—I sags, cousin Spendlove, answered Mr. Bennet, I am afraid you must not speak in the plural number; but I hope Mr. Frankly and Mr. Frankly's *wife* will come often *on purpose* to see *us*.—I truly join in the wish added Mrs. Bennet; but, my dear, you embarrass our cousin.—The conversation then turned on other subjects.



As I expected a Letter from my brother, in pursuance of his promise, I would not seal mine 'till I could transcribe his for your perusal. You will rejoice in his honourable procedure. I am in hopes he will soon be more explicit, than in personal conversation. I shall be with you in a day or two, but

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have

have promised Mr. Bennet to repeat my visit very soon. Mrs. Bennet politely said, She was much pleased my own inclination was compleatly gratified by the indulgence of theirs.

I send you no account of our tour, as you have seen Lord ****'s seat and gardens.

I know you will participate in my happiness. Was you as happy as you are amiable and good, you would be supremely blest, and enjoy the felicity most sincerely wished you by,

My dearest sister,

Your ever affectionate brother and friend,

HENRY FRANKLY.

P. S. I am desired to present Miss Spendlove's best respects.

L E T

L E T T E R XXI.

*Mr. GOODWILL to Mr. FRANKLY, inclosed
in the foregoing.*

Dear Brother,

YOU requested me to write, and I am rejoiced to find a confident in an affair, which has occasioned me much uneasiness—About an hour after you left town, Allmode came to me at Will's, in prodigious high spirits.—I asked him the cause of his transports. You are not capable of love, said I; but to the charms of wealth, which supplies your darling passion, I know you are blindly devoted. You may laugh at me, Charles, answered he; but I have great reason to exult. A rich heiress of 30,000 l. has determined to make me master of herself and fortune. The consideration of the latter, has influenced me to accept the former, and this sudden order to embark must precipitate my marriage. You must know, Charles, the girl is infected with the madness of romance; she resided in **** where I was lately on a visit, and I secured her affection without an absolute declaration of my own, which it seems the laws of romance forbid, 'till after many

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years

years of servitude. But this order has obliged me to violate the rules. I have this morning poured forth the finest rhapsody of nonsense, romance ever furnished. I ventured not to touch her hand, but falling at her feet, begged her to extend an eye of pity on a poor suffering wretch, whose life depended on her favour. Animated by the hope of obtaining—not a wife—but a fortune to support my—*extravagance*, if you please, never was there a more pathetic speech uttered than mine; and what do you think I have gained by this exertion of eloquence? Why truly, a command to live, and a promise, that if by my courage my country is delivered from its enemies, her hand shall reward my prowess. There's for you, Charles; but a little romantic toad, she does not know that my affairs require a quicker proceeding. She must be mine this day, or my equipage and figure will be in a shabby condition—How! cried I hastily; so soon? But what relations has she? A father, answered he, a clergyman of excellent character, but who must not be a party in this affair, lest he interfere to my prejudice—I have provided a parson, and shall return to her instantly; her maid, who is my sure friend, will influence her to consent to my proposal. She shall
leave

leave her father immediately, and—Softly, captain, interrupted I; your scheme is not so eligible as you imagine. Do you consider this as an attempt to steal an heiress? Pho! said he, that matters not. Her father will give up the fortune to secure his daughter's honour, when he finds she *is* a wife. What say you, Charles, will you be her father at the altar?—Ah! ha! 'tis a lucky thought—Mr. Forest, her natural father, will not assist at this ceremony.—Where are her lodgings, captain? demanded I, resolved to inform Miss Forest of her danger. He gave me a direction to a house in Grosvenor-square. Never fear, added he, the consequences. Her father will accept my terms of reconciliation—Of that, answered I, you are not quite certain. Indignation might prompt him to use the utmost rigour of the law. But to leave this trifling, I must confess to you, captain Allmode, I can by no means consent to be an accessory in this affair. At first I thought it merely a matter of gaiety; but now I have reason to fear you have sufficient influence to persuade the young lady to her ruin, by betraying her unsuspecting confidence, I cannot even be passive.—He attempted to assume a fierce look, and cried, What do you mean, Sir? You will not sure

abuse—Hush, interrupted I; not a word of that nature. I am as much a friend to you as to Miss Forest, in preventing this deception.—Unless you promise to abandon this project, I will wait on Mr. Forest, and acquaint him with it, that he may render your design impracticable. You will not do me such an injury, resumed he; my fortune will be utterly ruined. And can you, answered I, think of ruining in her hopes of happiness the woman to whom you would be indebted for support? Why look ye, Mr. Goodwill, said he, where my own interest is concerned, I am not very quicksighted to the misfortunes of others. For the girl I have no particular affection; and could I obtain her money by any other means, I have no desire to enter into the matrimonial shackle.—When I have possession of her fortune, I shall permit her to chuse her own place of residence, as I shall not like to be the jest of my acquaintance for being the companion of my *wife*. I could not forbear this exclamation, I blush to have been so long deceived by a fellow void of humanity—But it would be madness to revenge myself on thee for my own folly; yet remember this advice; refrain your visits to Miss Forest, for I will take effectual means to prevent your purpose.—He left me without making

making answer, when, apprehensive he would have rhetorick sufficient for the young lady's destruction, I went immediately to her lodging, and hearing her father was at home, thought it most proper to inquire for him. Mr. Forest is a truly sensible, agreeable man. I found it best to be entirely explicit—When I had acquainted him with the whole affair, he thanked me with the utmost warmth; then begged to know my name, and on hearing it, told me he had some remembrance of my father. You have performed the part of a man of honour, said he, with a look of extreme sensibility, and I most sincerely thank you. Give me leave to request you will inform my daughter of the circumstances, and advise her to retire awhile to her aunt's at Hampstead, lest this fellow should attempt some violence.—Her servant I shall discharge before we leave town.—I have never treated my daughter in a manner to instil any fear of me. I wished her to consider me as a friend, which she shall prove me to be. I foolishly indulged her fondness of romances; and this false step is the consequence of her mistaken notions—I am certain she will be shocked on finding herself the cause of affliction to me. Her love for me as a friend, and reverence as a parent, have made her always

consider my displeasure as her most heavy misfortune.—She has not incurred it—I pity her weakness, without the least resentment of her want of confidence, which I am certain is the effect of her erroneous reading.

Mr. Forest then went to his daughter's apartment, and presently returned with her. Miss Forest has not only a striking elegance of form, but a pleasing sweetness in her manner. Her dress, though different from the reigning taste, is very ornamental.—Her father desiring her to sit with me during his absence, retired. Miss Forest asked me to take a chair. After a few general questions, I mentioned captain Allmode. She blushed—Are you acquainted with him, Madam, said I? I have too great a regard to integrity, answered she, to deny my knowledge of him. Perhaps my confusion raises in you suspicions of the truth.—You are a stranger to me, Sir; but I imagine you are not so to my father—Perhaps captain Allmode has made you the confident of his passion. Haply he has employed you to solicit my immediate consent to be his. But, Sir, I shall enter into no such engagement—If by his means his country is rescued from its invaders, my hand shall be the reward of his conquest; and I make no doubt my father will joyfully receive

ceive for a son the preserver of his country—
I could not help smiling at her opinion of
Allmode so herocially exprest. Do you think
then, Madam, said I, that the captain will
be able with his single arm to entitle himself
to such a prize as the lovely Miss Forest?—
Questionless, Sir, answered she, the invincible
Artaban, the intrepid Cæsario, the valiant
Coriolanus, resisted and overcame armies as po-
tent as those of the enemies of our country. Tho'
I possess not the charms of the fair Elisa, the
lovely Candace, nor the incomparable Cleo-
patra, yet captain Allmode has devoted him-
self to my service, and I make no doubt his
courage in this enterprize will equal the con-
stancy which is the characteristic of an hero.
—I do not suspect one more than the other,
replied I; for you must give me leave to say,
Madam, I doubt both.—I then acquainted
her with captain Allmode's design and man-
ner of proceeding, with his poverty and real
character. She listened with great attention.
—I cannot think, Sir, said she, when I had
finished, that you intend to deceive me.
There is something in your appearance which
forbids suspicion—My father too introduced
you—he questionless knew the purport of
your visit, and is acquainted with my folly—

I am

I am afraid he will suffer for it.—Your father, Madam, answered I, seems a most indulgent parent and excellent man. I have no acquaintance with him—I was not even *personally* known to him 'till this morning. It was to save you I came hither.—I am infinitely indebted to you, Sir, resumed she ; and for my father, he is indeed the best of men. He deserved and ought to have obtained my confidence—I know little of the manners of the world you live in, continued she ; but captain Allmode's insincerity makes me apprehensive, that the characters of which I have read are not representations of real life, but are pourtrayed by the author's imagination, and have no existence but in idea. Your opinion is very just, Madam, answered I ; those books inculcate a false notion of men and manners. Virtue is disgraced, and a delusive phantom substituted in her stead. Love is the subject of these tales ; but it is a love that does not animate to the practice of true virtue, but which renders to the beloved object that adoration due only to the Deity. The lover despises death because he expires at the feet of his mistress, and wishes for no other heaven, than the assurance of having his memory preserved in her breast.

The

The love of a christian is built on a more permanent basis, and will exist even in eternity!—

Mr. Forest now entered the room. Excuse me, Mr. Goodwill, for having been a listener to your discourse, and forgive my suspicions. You was a stranger to me, and my daughter's safety was in danger.—I am convinced of *your* honour, and *her* affection for me.—A tender scene ensued between them, which can more easily be imagined than described. They repeated their acknowledgements to me, and gave me fresh assurances of friendship.—As they proposed going to Hampstead in an hour, I took leave, highly pleased with them, and rejoiced to have saved so much merit from distress. I hope when they return we shall be frequent visitors.

I suppose you will scarcely have time to answer this by letter. Be assured you have my best wishes for your success in this most essential point to your happiness; and however my conduct has destroyed your peace, I hope to be the means of restoring it to every particular of my family, and of recovering that tranquillity which has long been banished from the breast of

Your truly affectionate brother,
and sincere friend,

CHARLES GOODWILL.

L E T T E R XXII.

Captain ALLMODE to Lord ROVEWELL.

YOU will be surprized, my Lord, I was not punctual to my appointment, but my scheme is utterly destroyed. That wretch Goodwill threatens to acquaint Mr. Forest with my design. I have therefore left my lodging privately; lest the intention of stealing an heiress should produce fatal consequences; and as my landlady may probably wish I had performed the usual ceremony of taking leave, I chuse to lie perdue.—It is a lucky circumstance that I am ordered abroad so soon; but, my Lord, you must assist me—Faith I have very little of the ready, and travelling is expensive.—I must have a new suit—This is actually shabby—Your wardrobe is well filled.—

Perhaps you will admire my calmness in supporting the loss of the lady.—I wish *the lady* had been the greatest loss—I should then have been *quite* a hero in fortitude. The attendance, submission, and the thousand sedulities Miss Forest expected were intolerable fatigues—The attraction of fortune indeed was powerful—I was indefatigable. My dress and address were irresistible—

*The female sex are caught by noise and shew,
Delight in nonsense, and admire a beau.*

I wish you would make an attack on Goodwill's wife—You are very tedious in preparation—Surely you have not altered your purpose—I *must* be revenged on him—Be you my instrument—but I beg your pardon—you will disdain that office. Well then, let love to Mrs. Goodwill, and hatred to her husband, as your beloved rival, animate you.—I must leave town to-morrow. Rejoice me before I go with an account of your success. It will be some consolation for the disappointment that fool Goodwill has occasioned me, as I know his happiness depends on his wife's fidelity.—

Remember, my Lord, the deplorable consequence of an empty purse, and dispatch to me some relief.

I am at Mr. Spilman's in Wapping. No very creditable house (in situation and appearance, I mean) for your *Lordship's* reception. If you cannot come, send by a porter, that there may be no discovery; but if the cordial can be administered with your own hand it will have the most salutary effect on

Your affectionate

E. ALLMODE.

L E T T E R. XXIII.

Lord ROVEWELL to Captain ALLMODE.

SO your scheme is entirely destroyed—
 Poor captain! your purse is empty, and
 your dress shabby—I can't assist you with
 money, Ned; positively I can't; for I have
 been stript of every farthing this morning at
 White's—I may perhaps send you a suit by
 and bye—I can't see you this afternoon—My
 time is too precious—Prithee, Ned, what
 sort of girl is thy Henrietta? Is she hand-
 some? Will she repay the trouble of a pur-
 suit? The loss of the finest woman in the
 world would not affect thee. It is only thy
 vanity that seeks gratification—Thou art a
 poet too—Thy heart is indeed at liberty, or
 it could not have permitted at this time such
 an exertion of thy talents.

Leave Goodwill to me—I *do* take upon
 me amply to revenge your cause—I hope by
 artifice and rhetorick to lull his wife to a
 forgetfulness of her honour—A fine woman,
 neglected by her husband, is in a dangerous
 situation—yet this fool loves her to distrac-
 tion—I am charmed with Mrs. Goodwill,
 but I can't slight every other woman to gra-
 tify

tify this inclination. I have not lost time with the husband ; for I have tolerably fleeced his pocket, and seduced him from his happiness and duty. You know it was for his wife's sake I cultivated this acquaintance ; yet, will you believe me, her majestic virtue has inspired me with so much awe I have never dared to hint my love.

But this afternoon I hear Goodwill and his sister are engaged abroad—Frankly and Miss Spendlove are in the country—Mrs. Goodwill's little boy being somewhat indisposed, the mother's tenderness keeps her at home. I will manage if possible to see her, and infuse suspicions into her mind which may facilitate my conquest—Oh ! impudence and eloquence assist me ! You shall know the result, if I have time from happier engagements to visit you.

Adieu.—

LET

L E T T E R XXIV.

Lord ROVEWELL to Captain ALLMODE.

I Have scarcely power to write; rage and disappointment tear my heart! Yet I must disclose, or madness will ensue—Prithee let me have none of thy nonsensical observations—It is to avoid them, and thy importunities, I determine not to see thee.—I am unfit for conversation—I could do some horrid act, and would leave my country for ever—But I must begin—

I went to Goodwill's house, soon after he and his sister were gone out: I was apprehensive Mrs. Goodwill would have refused me admittance; but most fortunately, as I then thought it, she crossed the hall, when the servant opened the door: As I bowed to her, she could not avoid speaking; yet she immediately told me, Mr. Goodwill was not at home—I hastily answered, I then begged a few moment's conference with her. As I made this request before the servant, she could not deny the grant of it; but I saw by her looks how much her heart disdained me. When we entered the parlour, she coolly asked,

if

if I had any particular business with Mr. Goodwill,—No, Madam, replied I, nothing of importance; to say truth, I rather *wished* to find you alone, having something to communicate, that demands your private ear. Whatever you have to say, my Lord, answered she, cannot be improper for my husband to know—I receive no private intelligence—I heartily wish, Madam, said I, Mr. Goodwill's conduct was equally meritorious—But—She started up—My Lord, cried she, with an air of contempt, your servant. The man who dares to speak ill of my husband, I regard as *my* worst enemy—She approached the door, when I caught her hand, and drew her gently back—What do you mean, my Lord? said she, struggling to free herself—You must not leave me, Madam, returned I—How? must not, repeated the charming creature, her eyes sparkling with indignation—

No, Madam; permit me to detain you, said I, till you have heard my story. I come, Madam, as a friend, to offer you my assistance. If my zeal is offensive, it is well meant. Suffer me to explain myself, or your husband's life is in danger. Oh! Heavens, cried Mrs. Goodwill, with a look of tender

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con-

consternation, his life in danger!—He has been instrumental, proceeded I, in carrying off a young lady of fashion, whom he keeps as a mistress. If I discover this affair, his certain death is the consequence.—Impossible! answered she, He is not capable of so much baseness! The heart that forged this falsehood, is alone capable of such a deed. You disbelieve me then, Madam, rejoined I; you really imagine your husband just to your merit—How are you deceived!—If I am in an error, let me, said she, enjoy the pleasing deception; for surely, to dream of happiness is preferable to the confirmation of real misery.—I would not have informed you of this attachment, answered I, if I could not have presented a method of redress. Take my advice, Madam. Assume a gay, lively air, frequent public places, coquet with some pretty fellow, and shew your husband, that if he neglects he is in danger of losing you—This will—She interrupted me with a disdainful glance; Thou detested adviser! What, shall I regain his love, by losing all right to his esteem? No, were both irrecoverable, I would not give up the satisfaction of conscious virtue—You can support unmoved, Madam, said I, the certainty
of

of Mr. Goodwill's estranged affection. You can bear he should sacrifice his time and fortune to other women; that he should neglect the delights of a lawful union, to gratify criminal desires; that he should forsake the blooming pledge of virtuous love, to supply, perhaps, the wants of a sickly illegal offspring—Can you submit to this injustice? Can you see him squander on another the rights of *your* child? Has the duty of a wife absorbed all considerations of maternal tenderness?—I perceived that I pierced her to the soul. The tear started in her eye, which she attempted to conceal. I was moved, yet would not abandon my design, but added, Do not weep, Madam; he merits not your tears—He has lost all right to your love and obedience; for by infringing his own, he releases you from your duty.—Indignation supplied her with the power of utterance, of which grief had deprived her. I do not relish your doctrine, said she; if human laws would acquit, my own heart and divine wisdom would condemn me; for the fault of another cannot disengage me from vows solemnly plighted before the Deity—As criminals, I pity those unhappy women who are slaves to passions, the indulgence of which

threaten destruction. If this unlawful commerce gives birth to an helpless infant, its own innocence, and the share my husband had in the poor babe, would awaken my tenderness in its behalf. If such a misfortune happens, may neither the bitterness of want, nor the miseries too natural to its situation, ever be the portion of the little creature—Surely my husband could not forsake it—That would indeed be cruelty.—

I was quite at a loss, how to inflame her passions. Surely she is more than woman!—If she could feel for the wretchedness of an infant, whose birth was an assurance of her husband's infidelity, what must she suffer for the offspring of virtuous love, endeared by the ties of maternal affection—Why, said I, was so rich a jewel bestowed on a person insensible of its value? One so greatly obliged, to prove unkind! Would to heaven a man more capable of rewarding properly such merit, had been the happy possessor of your heart.—This insinuation again roused her attention, which had been turned on her own reflections—Talk not, answered she, of Mr. Goodwill's obligations to me—Love only prompted me to act in a manner consistent with itself—Had *he* been in my situation,
with

with the same tender regard, he would have softened my affliction. Yet, Madam, replied I, to live in continual uneasiness; to know that every part of *your* duty is fulfilled, whilst *his* is utterly neglected; that his criminal expences abridge you not only of rational *amusements*, but the relief of others real wants; Do not the seconfiderations excite your resentment?—Not my resentment, answered she, but my most sincere compassion and affliction—I could no longer forbear to unmask my design. Since, said I, there appears no other means to avoid impending misery, fly, dearest Madam, to that protection which will never desert you. My house and fortune are entirely at your command—In *my* heart you will reign without a rival. The world, which has long wondered at your too-submissive patience, will commend your resolution. You do not answer me—Amazement, disdain, and anguish, were painted on her most expressive countenance—Her silence permitted me to add—You have already amply discharged the duty of a wife—Remember now you are a mother—I will adopt your son; he shall inherit my estate, and be as dear to me as if allied by nature—Can there, exclaimed she, lifting up her fine eyes

to heaven, can there be such villainy in man? —I must speak, lest you imagine me convinced by your vile insinuations—Thou mean invader of the rights of an injured husband, thy artifice is too gross to impose on me!—To seduce the wife, the husband's character must be the sacrifice—I despise thy cruel stratagem—Mr. Goodwill's merit rises to my delighted remembrance, and I am confirmed in the opinion of *his* honour by this *farther* conviction of *thy* depravity. But to converse with thee is injurious to the dignity of affronted virtue—May remorse awaken thee to amendment, and mayst thou never more attempt to corrupt innocence! She then hastily left the room. With what elevation of sentiment did she triumph over me! I was flying after her, when I met in the next apartment the happy husband.—I found he had overheard us, though he had hid himself behind a screen, which prevented his wife's observation of him.—I knew *I* had injured him beyond forgiveness, and wished by his death to obtain the glorious prize for which I sigh.—But the duce take him—the fellow would not fight—He talked of duty, and honour, and—I know not what; a pretended fit of awakened conscience. A fool! His conscience should have restrained

him from yielding to my insinuations—Where was this bosom friend, when he forsook his wife, and joined me in pursuits, which he knew were contrary to his duty?—But the truth was, he feared to engage with me—So I left the house, disappointed both in love and revenge.—But I can waste no more time on *thee*—I *must* invent some new project, or I believe I shall be mad.

I cannot bear a formal conclusion. You know the character of

Your

ROVEWELL.

H 4 L E T.

LETTER XXV.

Captain ALLMODE to Lord ROVEWELL.

ALAS! my dear Lord, my revenge is still imperfect.—What a mean wretch is this fellow! Yet perhaps to this calmness you owe your safety; for I don't think he wants either courage or skill—And even you have confessed that his errors proceed rather from a weak head, than natural depravity of heart. I declined turning my sword upon him, for reasons too tedious now to mention.—

But hark'ye, my Lord; let me give you one piece of advice. Your seduction of the young lady, which you imagined a profound secret, is divulged to her honourable father, who vows revenge for the injury—Her death, with every horrid circumstance, is known to him—He is as violent in his purposes of revenge, as you are in your passions for the fair sex.

I wish you had satisfied your own inclination, and revenged my quarrel, which would have been an additional reason to have fled the

the kingdom ; but it is now too late for farther attempts. Your life is most certainly in danger ; I had this account from a person who knows nothing of our connection, and I cannot doubt the truth of the report.

Come then, my Lord, let us embark together—We can be as happy abroad as in England—Change of climate need not produce any change of manners—You may pursue your favourite amusements, and assist your old friend in a less expensive folly—Or, to speak more *poetically*,

*We'll still improve the talents we possess,
Your study, pleasure, mine a taste for dress.*

Come, my Lord, support your usual gaiety—You will not leave many friends behind you ; and by being a friend to me, you'll secure to yourself one in

E. ALLMODE.

LET.

L E T T E R XXVI.

Lord ROVEWELL to Captain ALLMODE.

*Must I thus leave thee, paradise ? Thus leave
Thee, native soil ? This happy town and court,
The haunt of beauties ?*

IS this the result of my projects ? To be driven from my native land ? Forced to seek an asylum amongst strangers ?—But to confess the truth, Ned, I must *seek* happiness, if I stay at home ; for I never yet have found it. Instead of procuring my own satisfaction by promoting the welfare of others, my whole life has been made wretched by an ill-judged pursuit.—Goodwill was indeed seduced by *my* art, not *his* vicious inclinations. *His* reflections are sweet, when compared with *mine*. And his wife, even since his estrangement, has been happier than the villain who deprived her of him.—There is a delightful serenity which accompanies suffering virtue, and renders it superior to trial ! Methought Mrs. Goodwill, when she repulsed me, appeared more angelic than ever. Virtue sparkled in her eye, and glowed on her cheek. Never was the cause of heaven so well supported,

ported.—I felt abashed—I secretly acknowledged the superiority of goodness—Yet, as if animated by some spirit, an enemy to mankind, I wished to debase her character, and to render guilty the object of my adoration—Her good angel prevailed—She flew from me—

I have injured Goodwill; but I cannot forgive him for being assured of my guilt, and permitting me to live—What are thy *reasons* for supposing him a hero? *Reasons too tedious to mention*—Too obvious to need being mentioned, ha! Ned?—Thou art a conceited fellow; but I imagine thou hast a mind to inspire me with a good opinion of thy courage—It won't do, captain; but how I trifle—Goodwill certainly intends to reform, and his wife will receive him—I have hastened my own in the endeavour to complete his ruin—Fool!—blockhead!—madman!

Thou hast mentioned too another cause of despair—Yes! I was the seducer of Lady Juliet—She was promised, you know, to Lord M——. I handed her one night from the play to a chair I had hired, and carried her to a proper house for her reception—She was a very amiable woman—On her vowing revenge on her base betrayer, I would not suffer

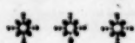
fer her to return home. Whether in my absence she was necessary to her own death, or whether the wretch with whom I placed her, on hearing her quality, dispatched her, to avoid discovery, I know not, but I received the former account.

I believe you was only imperfectly acquainted with this affair till now.—Lord M— was then on his travels. He is lately returned, and I heard was determined to find out the author of Lady Juliet's misfortunes. Her father has made many fruitless enquiries. To my servant I must attribute this discovery, who is gone off, after robbing me of whatever valuables he could find. I *must* pursue your advice, and shall take post-horses early to-morrow morning, for I have no time to lose. I shall not join you at Portsmouth till you are ready to sail, and then in disguise. I will hire a servant entirely unacquainted with me, and assume a borrowed name; by which means I hope to escape without observation. I have wrote to my uncle, told him the affair, and desired him to procure my pardon, with promises of entire reformation. The old man is not hard-hearted—I am the hope of his family; and I flatter myself he will even extend his purse-strings to facilitate my return.

return. Courage, Ned ! I shall revisit England. In the mean time (for this is rather a distant prospect) you shall share my purse and wardrobe—I have converted what moveables my servant left me into money, and intreated my uncle to be regular in his remittances—You and I may be useful to each other. I fear I have been too long a villain to commence a life of virtue—I am too young to reform—Repentance is the task of age—Shall I not still court the *appearance* of happiness, since its reality is difficult to be attained ?—Yet, in spite of this affected gaiety, I almost envy thy insipid state—I have proved, that the success of all those contrivances, on which my boasted superiority was founded, have only shewn the inefficacy of guilty stratagem to procure happiness.—What horrors filled my breast, when in my violent fever I revolved my past crimes, and feared future punishment !—Despair of life made me consider the consequences of death !—In these hours of solitude, heavy reflections will not be banished. I dare not fly to company for relief—The wicked have few real friends—My most intimate acquaintance are those from whom I have most to fear.—You, Ned, whom I have considered as the mere tool of my purposes, I now look upon as an happier being than myself—You
have

have not been enslaved by vice, but seduced by folly—Oh! Allmode, how does conviction impress this truth on my soul, that superior talents are only properly exerted when they render us useful members of society! Our abuse of intended blessings is the certain cause of our condemnation.—

Believe me, Ned, I would willingly relinquish every lucrative possession, every ambitious project, every gay delight, to be enabled to recollect one virtuous action, the remembrance of which would cast a ray of comfort on my benighted soul, and render my exile less dreadful. The disorder of my mind infects my body—Sometimes my veins feel scorched by a consuming fire—at others, chilled by the frost of bitter despondency. I dare not lay aside my pen, lest a more offensive weapon should present itself.



I have scribbled all night.—Methinks a dawn of joy breaks in to dissipate the gloom—Though I can receive no satisfaction from a retrospect, my future conduct may atone for the past, and present me with a most delightful prospect.—Though I am old in vice, my age permits me to expect many added years.—Continued excesses might have
been

been the means of abridging, but regularity will teach me to enjoy them.—Yes, Ned, I *will* reform. My banishment, which 'till this minute I considered as a misfortune, I now find may redound to my greatest, most lasting happiness—I shall leave all those companions, whose examples influenced, whose contrivances assisted, and whose contempt might have intimidated me—For you, I know your heart is so ductile, it will pursue with pleasure the path I tread—Pardon me for deceiving you into one which would have terminated in your destruction—.You want only resolution to practice every duty.—You will forsake your *follies*, when you find them an introduction to *guilt*—I have been a hero in overcoming the difficulties that opposed the triumph of vice ; I am now convinced he only is a true hero, who conquers the obstacles which impede the advancement of virtue.—

You will imagine, perhaps, my change is too sudden to be permanent. I shall neither be surprized nor displeased at such a suspicion ; for though (according to a writer I once dipt into, “ To know ourselves diseased, “ is half our cure ;” yet Rowe was a more excellent judge of nature, when he says,

Habi-

*Habitual evils change not on a sudden ;
 But many days must pass, and many sorrows :
 Conscious remorse and anguish must be felt,
 To curb desire, to break the stubborn will,
 And work a second nature in the soul,
 Ere virtue can resume the place she lost ;
 'Tis else dissimulation.*

But, as I before observed, I shall have no enemy soliciting without, to assist the seducer within. Besides, I am diffident of my own strength, at the same time that I determine to exert it.—I will, if possible,

————— *Conquer difficulties,
 By daring to attempt them. Sloth and folly
 Shiver and shrink at sight of toil and hazard,
 And make th' impossibility they fear.*

But the horses are at the door—I have hired for the direct contrary road to that I propose taking—This will elude any search. Adieu ! Ned—As you have been the assistant of vice, be now the promoter of virtue, and aid with your counsel and example the good resolutions of,

Your sincere friend,

ROVEWELL.

L E T-

LETTER XXVII.

Mr. GOODWILL to Mr. FRANKLY.

I AM not *very* fearful, my dear brother, that this letter will arrive *after* your departure from * * * *, but I hope it will find you preparing to revisit town. Whilst *you* have been enjoying the sweets of a tender reciprocal affection, *I* have been fluctuating on the brink of a precipice, which had almost betrayed me into an irrecoverable depth of perdition! I *have* escaped. Yes, my friend, (I now dare call you by that expressive name) the powers of religion have exerted their force to combat the attacks of error, and are triumphant.—Gracious God! to thee I owe my deliverance.—

I was invited yesterday, with my wife and sister, to Mr. Delme's; my Clarinda declined the visit, as our little Charly was not perfectly well. Lucy and I went but found nobody at home, that gentleman and his lady having been sent for to attend her mother, who was taken with a fit. My sister being full dressed, chose to make another visit, but I resolved

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to

to go back to my wife and child. I entered the house, and was about to open the parlour door, when the sound of Rovewell's voice determined me to listen to his discourse. I cannot say I was so much surprized as enraged at his offers to my wife: Imagine every plea that guilt can form, and then represent to yourself all that virtuous indignation which animates the breast of innocence to surmount the assaults of vice. Even my rage was inferior to the admiration and reverence which I felt for my Clarinda. I could scarcely forbear flying to her arms, and acknowledging my own unworthiness of such virtue, when I heard her start up, and had only sufficient time to retire behind a large screen. She ran directly to her chamber; and Rovewell was crossing the hall in haste when I stopt him.—Never shall I forget the conscious guilt and rage that flashed in his eyes, nor the mingled terror with which he viewed me before him. To say I am surprized at your behaviour, cried I, is to own I have been the dupe of your deceit. Thy looks are a sufficient proof of thy guilt, had not the conversation I overheard given me an earlier conviction of thy baseness—Follow me this instant to some convenient place, lest I violate

violate the laws of hospitality—The wretch stammered forth this reply—Come, prithee Goodwill—What reason have you for anger?—The world has long been witness to thy neglect of this charming woman, and thy preference of wretches, whose only recommendation is their sex—Must she languish away the bloom of beauty, because thou hast not eyes to admire it? If I have offered my heart and fortune to Mrs. Goodwill, *you* have no right to insult me, who have most cruelly injured her—

Most diabolical pleader, answered I, didst thou not seduce me from my duty, and withdraw my person (thou canst not say my love) from this amiable woman?—This partly encouraged him to answer readily, Had you been settled in your principles, my insinuations had not prevailed. True virtue is exercised and strengthened by trials, whilst weakness easily yields to temptation.—Tho' from the mouth of an enemy I could not be deaf to the voice of truth.—What a caution would this example afford to the unsteady mind! I became the object of *his* contempt to whom I sacrificed my duty! I stood abashed on recollection of my design—Passion had almost hurried me into the commission of another

crime, which might have proved more fatal than the former.—My wife and child also rendered life desirable, that I might discharge the debt I owe them. I will not venture to die, said I to myself, while the duties of life are unperformed—I may live to *be* happy, and to make *others* happy, and I shall then answer the intent for which I was placed here. That I have been miserable, was the consequence of being guilty——

My continued silence, and the appearance of irresolution, inspired my detestable adversary with some sparks of courage. Come, Sir, said he, I will follow you where you please, I do not mean to parly—I have reflected on my own conduct, answered I; which appears so blameable, I dare not defend it.—I forgive thy attempt on my wife, whom I have indeed more cruelly injured.—It shall be the study of my life to make her some amends for what she has suffered. Be it thine to correct thy vicious inclinations.—I now repay the obligation I owe thee for defending my life——Let me never see thee more, lest I forget my resolution, and chastise thee for a villain. In a just cause my sword shall ever be readily exerted; but I *dare* not venture myself, nor would I plunge thee into eternal misery.

My

My behaviour, the place, and the sight of some of the servants at a little distance, animated him so much that he cried—And art thou really afraid to draw thy sword, poor Goodwill?—I laid my hand on my sword, without any intention of drawing it, for my contempt was equal to my indignation—He changed colour, and only added, Well then, to part friends it is best to leave you abruptly, and instantly quitted the house.—How my heart rejoiced at my escape from incurring farther guilt! I retired to my study to indulge reflection, for I was too much ruffled to appear before my wife. As you know I sometimes attempt poetry, I will send you a few lines, which the harmony of my mind inspired; though perhaps it is not communicated to those rhymes in which I have cloathed my thoughts.

*Did God these goodly frames with life supply
Merely to breathe, to suffer, and to die?
Shall impious man assume the pow'r of fate,
And blindly rush upon a future state?
Tho' virtue's path the road to honour lies;
Inspir'd by her, false glory we despise.
He who o'ercomes himself, alone is truly wise!
By noblest laws the christian learns to live,
Nor dares t'invade heav'n's dread prerogative.*

Oh! Frankly, though my heart has been bewildered in the labyrinth of vice, it never ceased its wishes to regain the road of virtue. Difficulty weakened my endeavour—A false friend, by deceiving me with the shadow of honour, prevented my aspiring to the reality.—Oh! if my Clarinda will accept a sincere convert, *her* forgiveness and restored affection will excite my hopes of the divine pardon, and secure my reformation,—My heart beats high with the delightful, the extatic thoughts, But *can* she forgive me?—Hasten to my assistance—plead my cause—Love will awhile resign you to the invitation of friendship, Come, and restore to happiness

Your affectionate brother and friend,

CHARLES GOODWILL,

L E T.

L E T T E R XXVIII.

Mr. GOODWILL to Mr. FRANKLY.

Dear Brother,

A GENTLEMAN who travels post to * * * *, has undertaken to deliver this into your hands to-morrow.—When I had finished my letter last night, I went to the coffee-house. On my return I was informed, that a clergyman had been to enquire for me, that he staid some time, but finding it was late, he had left a letter for me. I was at a loss to guess the person. Judge my surprize, esteem, and admiration on the perusal of the inclosed letter from Mr. Forest. Read it here, that my account may be regular.

Dear Sir,

T HE obligation you have conferred on me, in rescuing my only child from destruction, excited in my breast sentiments of the most perfect gratitude and esteem. Your appearance is sufficient to inspire love.

I could not help wishing a more intimate acquaintance ; but as I knew from your own

information you are married, I was prompted by parental caution and tenderness to enquire, whether the character of your wife, in the opinion of the world, corresponded with that description your love had painted. Mrs. Goodwill, the whole town proclaims, is a model of female perfection. Not even envy dares to murmur a whisper to her prejudice. — Was it possible for the insinuating seducer to withdraw a husband's affection from such a wife? And after she had blest him with a sweet pledge of love?—Pardon me if the incredulity my regard excited, was constrained to yield to the force of conviction—It is the advice of an excellent writer, “Not “ to believe all we hear, nor officiously to “ report all we believe.” I was influenced by this precept—I thought Mr. Goodwill (forgive the application) who had been the protector of innocence, incapable of betraying it to misery, especially where obligations claimed a right to the most constant affection. I do not believe *all* I heard; but I have too much reason to be convinced every report is not without foundation.

You will think perhaps that I make an improper use of an acquaintance so lately began, and from which I have received such
 confi-

considerable advantage. You may censure me for officious zeal in attempting to dictate, where I am neither authorized by alliance, nor supported by intimacy. Is not friendship a sufficient plea? Should not gratitude strongly incite to save our benefactor from destruction? Do not the social and religious ties prompt us to redress and prevent the misfortunes of our fellow-creatures? Mr. Goodwill's heart feels the force of every generous emotion, though their effects have been for a time suspended, where they should have been most powerfully exerted.—Oh! let me intreat you to be influenced by the pleadings of your own heart, by conscience, by religion!—Be assured happiness does not consist in the indulgence, but suppression of unlawful desires.—Though no person ought to condemn another on a supposition he *could* have surmounted the trial in which the other failed, yet every one *may* resist temptation by reliance on the Almighty, and a proper exertion of his own strength.

Think not that age has rendered me forgetful of the pleasures of youth.—Chearfulness and content have always attended me.—I enjoy them unmixed, because I have no capital errors to reflect upon.—This assertion

is not the result of spiritual pride—I attribute my serenity more to an happy temperament, and an uncommon care, exerted by the best of parents in my education, than to my own strength of resolution. It is far easier to prevent the rise of passions, than to subdue them. You are young, and perhaps unacquainted with mankind—Early attached to a woman, worthy the most exalted regard, your heart dilated with joy.—Truth, generosity, frankness, and delicacy, actuated every part of her conduct.—From her you judged of the world in general; and because *she* possessed the reality of virtue, you suspected not that any one could be satisfied with assuming its appearance. And that a person, dignified by birth, distinguished by fortune, and favoured by nature, could be capable of descending to the meanness of vice, was a suspicion your generous breast would not entertain.—By the unsuspecting goodness of your heart you was first ensnared. Perhaps, want of resolution, a false shame, an ill-grounded sense of obligation to one, whose rank and fortune inspired respect, contributed to that depression of soul which obscured every genuine sentiment.—Remember, my dear Sir, it is not the rank of

the person, but the merit of the action which should direct our judgment, and can confer an obligation.—True friendship is always founded in virtue.—We are not to be influenced by what others *say* of us ; but consider only what we *ought* to do.—We should repent of our vices whilst we have youth and health to pursue them. The time will come when we shall be *constrained* to forsake them. What is the sacrifice to God, when we can be no longer the votaries of pleasure ?

You, Sir, who possess every blessing reason can request, or heaven bestow, want only to be convinced of your happiness, to secure the enjoyment.—You are united by the most solemn ties to a woman, whose merit alone should be esteemed sufficient to entitle her to the undivided possession of your heart.—Our divine lawgiver has not only by his presence sanctified the ceremonial of marriage, but, by a positive declaration, has enforced the duty of a strict observance of the connubial vow. “ What God hath joined “ together, let not man put asunder.” Marriage is a state most agreeable to reason, and conformable to the dictates of morality—A state instituted by the divine Author of our nature, to soften the asperities, and heighten the
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the blessings of life.—Beware how you obstinately pervert the gracious purpose; and be assured, you cannot, with impunity, continue to violate those sacred vows, which are registered in heaven.—

I have not mentioned the breach of that duty which every man owes to himself, and to the community of which he is a member. Can you reconcile the duties of a man and christian, with the commission of adultery, and the contempt of religion?—Can any sensual pleasures compensate for the loss of innocence?—Impossible! On the contrary, experience evinces, that they are attended by disquietude, and succeeded by remorse; for surely, when calm reflection takes place of riotous madness, you *must* condemn yourself, and confess there is no happiness equal to that which results from self-approbation, and no applause so delightful as the testimony of a good conscience.—In the female sex, reputation once lost is scarcely ever to be regain'd; and though from custom, and the degeneracy of mankind, unchastity is not considered a heinous crime in ours, yet with the Almighty there is no distinction, and he will as severely punish the one as the other.

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Some may stifle the workings of conscience, and become incapable of the power of reflection; but how dreadful is their situation! How soon must they awake from the dream of sensuality to all the miseries of a dreaded eternity! I hope you, Sir, cannot be *abandoned* to guilt.—But if the considerations of duty and futurity are too weak to reclaim you from a habit of vice, let the fear of present misery deter you from a false pursuit of happiness.—Tremble lest a perseverance in error should estrange from you the affections of a wife, in whom all the perfections of her sex are centered. Does her constant and delicate regard, her submissive resignation to your will, her sedulous attention to please, appear less amiable because they are the effects of duty, as well as the result of tender affection? This consideration should heighten your esteem and tenderness; for love, when under the guidance of virtue and religion, will subsist when time shall be lost in eternity!

From you, Sir, I expect the most exalted triumph; the triumph of true honour over a false delicacy that betrays to ruin.—A mind once fully impressed with a sense of duty, will soon recover its native dignity.—

I left

I left Hampstead again immediately, that I might inform myself of captain Allmode's designs. I find he was ordered to embark for **** on Saturday, and that he quits town to-morrow morning, therefore my daughter need not absent herself.

I chose, on this occasion, to be my own messenger—Will you do me the favour to call on me to-morrow morning? I shall be quite alone. Believe that my advice proceeds from a heart deeply interested in your happiness, and that after my own child, and sister, I know no person so dear as yourself to

Your grateful and affectionate

R. FOREST.

I waited on this true friend early this morning—He received me with the utmost benignity; and after the usual civilities, seeing me in apparent confusion—Mr. Goodwill, said he, the motive which induced me to write, acquits me to myself of impertinent zeal, and I hope will have a proper effect on you. There is an ingenuous concern expressed in your countenance, which convinces me I did not err in my opinion of the goodness

ness of your heart.—You will be all I wish you—The tears gushed from his eyes, as he endeavoured to say more. He clasped me in his arms, with all the warmth of gratified benevolence. It was some time before I was enough composed to reply—Oh! my father, my heart has long struggled between the conviction of duty, and the power of vice. It had yielded entirely to the former, before the perusal of your parental Letter. Your advice strengthens every good purpose—Continue to me that friendship you have exerted.—I will study to deserve it—Softened by his tender sympathy, and truly affected with a sense of past errors, I was constrained to be silent.——

* These tears, said Mr. Forest, flow from a contrite heart, and will doubtless be accepted by the Almighty—But let me caution you against a depression of spirit, hardly less fatal to the practice of religion, than the sallies of passion—The melancholy of enthusiasm, and the rigour of superstition, but ill supply the deficiency of those virtues they mean to represent.—Religion diffuses an unclouded cheerfulness over the aspect, and beams forth in the perpetual sunshine of benevolence.—Let the examples in Holy Scripture of pardon

don to offenders, revive your hopes, and animate your practice. I will instance only David and St. Paul, who after being long under the dominion of sin, were, on their repentance, raised to the highest exaltation of divine favour.—These examples, whilst they afford encouragement to true penitents, should soften the severity of virtue, and teach her professed votaries to “be merciful, even as our Father which is in heaven is merciful.”

I could not help interrupting the venerable man, by catching his hand, and exclaiming, whilst I gave it a strenuous pressure—Proceed, dear Sir, and instruct me in the duty in which you are so well established.—I was afraid, he answered, you would have thought my discourse tedious, but I beg your pardon. There are subjects, on which to trifle is a proof of folly; and duties, which to neglect, is the height of madness.—Believe me, Sir, a time *will* come, when those who have squandered happiness, in pursuit of pleasure, will vainly wish to recall the precious hours they have mispent.—Health is a proper season for repentance.—

What thanks, cried I, what gratitude do I owe you! But alas! will not the knowledge of one false step tincture the whole of an
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an otherwise unblemished life?—Will not common frailties be deemed the result of a vicious inclination? To the truly good, answered Mr. Forest, repentance being succeeded by perseverance in duty, will be a proof of sincerity, and secure a re-established reputation. The world's good opinion, though it does not constitute our real merit, yet ought to be regarded as a secondary incitement to our practice; but let not the insinuations of malice ruffle your tranquillity, nor disturb your laudable pursuits.—Remember, there is no real safety but in religion.—

Suffer neither the dread of contempt, nor the prevalence of bad example, to render you ashamed of shewing an invariable esteem and affection for your wife.—I am far from recommending that childish and troublesome fondness, which makes the spectators uneasy, and the parties ridiculous; but there is a conspicuous manly tenderness, an exalted friendship, which feels and imparts delight, and reflects equal honour on those who pay, and who receive it.—Never be influenced by the modish custom of appearing disgusted with diversions, because your wife is present—You pay an ill compliment to your own judgment, when you are guilty of injustice

to her. The pursuit of different amusements dissipates the affection; and though absence is sometimes unavoidable, true love will never find it necessary to its own preservation. —I grant, that the joy of meeting calls forth all the tenderness of susceptible hearts; but they who *wish* to prove the satisfaction, by losing awhile the object who is to inspire it, are conscious there is a coolness in their affection, which requires particular circumstances to exalt it to a degree worthy the name of love.

My reason and my heart, replied I, assent to the truth of your opinion—Happy is he who finds a gentle monitor to advise, and a bright example of christian virtue, to animate him to the discharge of his duty.—Most happy he who never erred! —

The world's contempt and distressful circumstances may plunge many into repeated acts of guilt, whom a more favourable situation, and milder treatment, might have reclaimed.

You say true, rejoined Mr. Forest; and I wish the abhorrence generally expressed against vice, was the effect of a settled habit of virtue. But alas! was it so, the truly penitent would be received into the number of the vir-

tuous

tuous with as much joy, as the real criminal was expelled from their society with pity and contempt.—The Deity (say some) is the only proper judge of sincere repentance.—Man is frequently deceived by appearances —They who have once been frail, may be suspected of yielding again to the force of temptation, and ought not to be trusted.—Are these sentiments the dictates of humanity? Does the christian religion banish charity from the breast, and instil the tormenting passions of suspicion and distrust? Should the same temptations solicit, where is the bold champion of virtue, who dares engage the attacks of vice with a certainty of conquest? How often has presumption suffered, when it has *sought* occasions of triumph?—Is there any man, who on condemnation of another, can acquit himself, on an impartial retrospect, of having ever swerved from his duty? When he finds *himself* fallible, (and who is free from blemish) he will drop a tear of pity for his weak brother, and implore the Almighty's forgiveness for *him*, as he hopes forgiveness of his own offences.—To forgive injuries is the ruling principle of christianity—Universal benevolence is true charity—We

may be circumscribed by Providence in our ability to distribute alms, but the social feelings of the heart extend towards all human kind.

It afflicts me, Mr. Goodwill, continued this excellent man, when I find the doctrines of christianity contemned, and disregarded, because they are promulged by those who appear actuated by motives of temporal interest to defend them.—I am afraid it will always be the case, that where worldly advantage is annexed to the profession of teaching duty, the professors will be esteemed hypocritical and interested, and their instructions considered as unmeaning declamations. It is expected a clergyman should be superior to vice; when, alas! the same passions incite, the same temptations assault, the same frail creature is overcome!

It is certain men of our profession, from the natural turn of their studies, have better opportunities of improvement; and from persons of superior abilities, “to whom much has been given, of them much will be required:” but whilst, on the one hand, the holy office is degraded into contempt, by an improper choice of its ministers; on the other,
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the generality of mankind will not be convinced a man chuses to devote himself to that way of life, because it is best calculated for the exercise of religious duties, but because it contributes to the increase of his worldly possessions.—It is great pity that they who actually feel the true spirit of charity, are not able to practise what they teach;—that they can only breathe forth their prayers and wishes, and contribute their *mite* towards the assistance of their fellow-creatures, without the power of bestowing the *necessary* relief.—Even where domestic duty forbids the exertion of public charity, want of ability will frequently be misconstrued want of inclination to do good.

Every word this good man uttered, increased my esteem and admiration. My heart glowed with the most tender sensations of gratitude.—I soon after took leave, intreating him to honour me with his friendship and acquaintance, and to permit me to introduce my Clarinda to Miss Forest.

I cannot wait for your return, though I wish your intercession with my wife—I must pour forth at her feet the overflowings of my heart.—The wished-for success of this

confidence will complete the temporal, and
I hope secure the eternal happiness of,

Dear Brother,

Your affectionate, and sincerely penitent,

CHARLES GOODWILL.

LETTER XXIX.

Miss GOODWILL to Mrs. FRANKLY.

Dear Madam,

IN order to heighten the joy which an happy event inspires, it is sometimes judged expedient to excite fears of a contrary catastrophe; but, I think, that a *delay* in conferring happiness shews a want of sensibility, and to sport with the suspense of a tender parent is even a degree of cruelty.

Your dear daughter is again restored to happiness—My brother is now a convert to her virtues—What he admired before, he now reveres and loves.—He seems more delighted even with the beauties of her person, than when it was first consigned to him; but his esteem and love are fixed on a more permanent

manent foundation than the fading graces of external bloom.—Yes, Madam, I thank heaven, I can now congratulate you on your daughter's triumph.—I have confessed to her my unreserved confidence in you, and the reasons which induced me to it. Well then, my dear Lucy, said she, do you inform my kind parent of my dear husband's return to virtue and me.—Tell her, I am the happiest of my sex—She embraced me, whilst tears of joy trickled down her cheeks. As I know not, continued she smiling, in what manner you have mentioned my uneasy state, I think you better qualified to impart my present happy situation—I answered, I had been enabled more fully to satisfy your impatience than she imagined, and that I had not the *least* share of curiosity in my composition.—She laughing said, She could account for it in a manner very favourable to me; then left the room, to give me an opportunity of writing.—I will now begin the pleasing narration.

We were seated together yesterday in my sister's chamber. Mr. Frankly, who returned to town last night, tells me, he has informed you of Lord Rovewell's amazing perfidy, and

every circumstance my brother acquainted him with.

An increase of dejection had appeared visible in my sister's looks, since her interview with that vile Lord, notwithstanding her endeavours to conceal it. As she had not intrusted me with his baseness, I took no notice of her uneasiness 'till yesterday, when we were together, I saw the tears steal down her cheeks. I could not then be silent.—

Be comforted, dearest sister, said I; you have no reason for this increase of affliction; I know all the deep-laid scheme of villainy, though absent when you suffered the indignity. My brother seems immersed in thought, and I hope the result of his contemplations will restore your tranquillity. His reason defended him from falling a sacrifice to the bad custom of an ill-judging world; but perhaps you are a stranger to this proof of Lord Rovewell's guilt and cowardice. No, your looks confess it is not a secret. Come, my dear Clarinda, dry up your tears, all will end well. I know it will. The circumstances I have heard leave me no cause to doubt it.

*You have heard—*Ah! sister, answered she, who is so well acquainted with my misfortune?
tune?

tune? It adds greatly to my affliction to find, that Mr. Goodwill's infidelity is known. Gracious heaven! how vain have been my endeavours to preserve his character.

You are too soon alarmed, my dear, replied I; it was your faithful Sukey alone who overheard Lord Rovewell's and my brother's quarrel.—Alas! said she, I flattered myself I was the only listener. My anxious tenderness, on hearing the sound of my husband's voice, prompted me to attend to their contest, and my fears almost hurried me to interrupt them. But Rovewell's abrupt departure relieved my uneasiness.

You need not be concerned, my dear sister, answered I; Sukey told me the affair with tears of affectionate sympathy. She begged my pardon, whilst she confessed she had, for some time, suspected not only Lord Rovewell's designs, but my brother's inconstancy. She added, that the alteration in your looks, though you attempted to assume an appearance of ease and cheerfulness, increased her fears; but that she dared not mention her distrust, as she knew your virtue and affection would have rendered you uneasy at another's knowledge of his fault.—Be assured, my dear, such goodness will not be long unrewarded.

rewarded. My brother, tho' blinded awhile by the mists of passion, will soon be illumined by the rays of truth, and your virtues will shine forth to his transported view with additional lustre.

Ah! sister, said she, I hardly dare flatter myself with any hopes of happiness. Yet, heaven knows, I have grieved more for Mr. Goodwill's errors than my own loss of his affection, though inestimable to me. May he return to virtue, from a consciousness of his fault; and may no sense of any injustice to me occasion him to breathe one sigh for my sufferings!

Exalted creature, cried I, he cannot merit such tenderness.—I was proceeding, when we heard my brother's voice, and he immediately entered the room. I thought, my dear, said he, you had been alone. Sister, may I intreat you to retire for a few moments.—My amiable Sister seemed to tremble for the pain she knew his confession would inflict on him. I was going, brother, answered I; for my little nephew will be glad of my attendance.—The mention of that dear boy seemed to touch him to the soul. He gave my sister a look, expressive of the utmost contrition for his error, and the wrongs she had suffered.

I left

I left that chamber, but could not retire to my own. I stole into a closet, which had a glass-door into their apartment. I could draw aside a curtain that hung over it, and observe every turn in their countenances.

My brother's confusion awhile suspended his purpose. At last, Can you not guess, my dear, said he—the subject on——Have I not trespassed beyond forgiveness?—Do not, interrupted my sister, do not my love, mention any painful subject.—Oh! answered my brother, you know not what deviations I have been guilty of.—No more, my dear, replied your amiable daughter; they can scarcely give *you* more pain on reflection, than *I* feel whilst you accuse yourself. Let every uneasy thought be banished for ever from your remembrance—Perhaps, my love, I have been negligent.—Perhaps your home has been less agreeable, because my disposition has inclined me to retirement. Forgive me, my dearest.—To see you happy has long been the first wish of my soul. It shall be my endeavour to render you so.

Thou art all perfection, exclaimed my brother hastily; and my crimes make me so unworthy your love, I am amazed at your partiality in my favour.—Why, said she, do
you

you exalt me, and depress yourself by so injurious a representation? Perhaps, had I been in your situation, I too might have erred. Alas! it would be the height of presumption to arrogate perfection to myself, because, unassailed by temptation, I have been steady in my duty.—To heaven I ascribe *my* perseverance, and to heaven I render thanks for *your* sincere repentance. My heart joyfully welcomes the wished-for return of your's. My brother gazed on her with delighted attention, and cried, Is it then possible you can still love me?—No, pursued he, with an air of melancholy, you consider I am your husband, and think it your duty to forgive me; but love cannot have any share in the satisfaction you express.—Your virtue must detest such guilt as mine.—It is injuring you to suppose you can love a villain.

Believe me, dearest of men, answered my sister, whilst I condemned your deviation, I pitied the weakness of human nature, which can scarcely arrive at perfection.—I feared more the excess of your despair on consideration, than an habitual inclination to vicious allurements. I knew the natural disposition of *your* mind influenced you to acts of virtue; but I was also assured of the depravity
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of *his*, to whom you too readily submitted your judgment. I still loved you with unabated affection—Nay it was even heightened by the dangerous situation to which you was exposed. My disapprobation of your errors occasioned not resentment, but affliction. My fears were alarmed, but no thought of revenge awakened. Say not I love a villain—I never loved the faults of any person ; but I admire, I reverence, I love your noble resolution. Such a return to duty is more glorious than the perseverance of untried virtue.

I listen to you, my Clarinda, replied my brother, with that enraptured and awful attention, which a celestial spirit would inspire.—You know not all my guilt—I perceived Miss Spendlove's attachment, which flattered my vanity, though my esteem and affection never swerved from you.—I did not indulge this unjustifiable passion, by seeking occasions of observing her preference of me ; (to which self-denial, my fears of alarming you perhaps contributed) but I trifled with your brother's uneasiness.—I have not said all, proceeded he, finding my sister had a design to interrupt him ; Lord Rovewell, to favour his purpose on you, introduced me to the acquaintance.

quaintance of a woman, to whose real character you are a stranger, or you would not have condescended to visit her. Her shameless conduct assisted my own resolution, and I despised her too much to be captivated by her charms.—Can it be Mrs. Bellair you mean? cried my sister—Excuse the interruption.—Indeed it was, answered he. Your Clarinda raised her eyes to heaven in silent acknowledgement. Miss Spendlove, resumed she, bewails her mistaken regard with real penitence; and I know intends shortly to make my brother happy—As to Mrs. Bellair, I own to you, the gaiety of her temper little suited the gravity of mine; and there were some levities in her conduct, which had determined me to forbear my visits.

Let me thank *you*, my love, said my brother, that Mr. Frankly and my sister, who knew my weakness, have restrained their just indignation from exposing me to the world. My vices have been too conspicuous to escape observation. To your kindness I am indebted for softening their resentment.—A blush overspread my sister's cheeks whilst her husband was speaking. When he had finished, My heart acquits me, said she, of confiding, even in their breasts, the occasion of my
melan-

melancholy. Your sister extorted from me the fatal secret, by threatening to upbraid your infidelity. I feared the entire alienation of your love; but I feared more the anguish you would feel from the severity of her reproaches, added to the stings of your own conscience.

My brother could only say—Kind, generous woman! Yet, resumed she, Lord Rove-well's character is so infamous, I sometimes thought my silence blameable. Perhaps it was the duty of a wife to warn you from the brink of the precipice on which you insensibly stood.—My child's interest too strongly prompted me to urge your return to virtue.—But I could not resolve to give you pain.—Why do you shun me, love?

Because, answered he, in a voice rendered faltering by internal agitation, I am unworthy to approach you—You are too good—I know not how to bear the conflict—

Cease, my life, cried my sister, taking his hand, and pressing it to her heart; you are dearer than ever to my fond soul. My brother struggled to answer; it was some time before he could say, Will you withdraw a moment?—My mind cannot, in your presence, support its disturbed emotions.

But for a moment then, replied she—I cannot leave you longer—’till you are perfectly reconciled to yourself.—

Be so kind, answered my brother, to prepare my sister to receive a sincere penitent. But let me see you first, that, like my guardian angel, you may support my weakness—Now, for a moment, adieu!

My sister left him, after raising his hand tenderly to her lips: I was going to follow her, imagining she would seek me, when my brother, after some moments profound meditation, cried out, Can it then be so?—Has she *indeed* forgiven me?—O! what a wretch am I, compared to such excellence!—If heaven rewards in just proportion to her virtues, how will she be exalted above me!—Her soul will be too pure to seek alliance with a mind so greatly her inferior.—Fool that I was! to hazard the loss of eternal happiness, for the enjoyment of sensual pleasure.—*Enjoyment!* there can be none, but in the practice of virtue.—How have I detested myself for herding with a set of villains, who are a disgrace to society! Yet immersed in vice, I had not sufficient resolution to break the chain that enthralled me.—I revered, I adored virtue in my Clarinda’s form;

form; but I seemed to have lost the power of imitation.—Conviction plunged me deeper in guilt.—What ought to have reformed, tended to condemn me.—Here he paused awhile; then resumed, Had the Almighty summoned me to his dread tribunal, with all my crimes unrepented of, I had now perhaps been vainly cursing that existence which was meant to entitle me to endless felicity!—The groveling mind must be wretched, even when surrounded by objects of bliss. It would even make “a hell of heaven.”—Clarinda too had then been forever lost to me. She might have pitied me; but she must have acknowledged the justice of the Deity. Now, though I must be placed far beneath her in the celestial regions, I shall increase my own by the contemplation of her happiness.—Aid me, O thou supreme power! to copy the bright example, that I may even in this life have a foretaste of those joys, which, without any alloy, will be the portion of an happy futurity.—Here I must learn the practice of those virtues, which will in another life constitute great part of our felicity!

I heard my sister call me, which obliged me to quit my station: I went to the stair-

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case,

case, and from thence to the nursery, that she might not suspect my concealment. She disclosed the delightful change with an extatic tenderness; and when she had concluded, begged me to follow her to her chamber in a few moments, and to embrace her dear, truly penitent husband. Then rising, she told me she would take one turn into the study, and go again to my brother. I crept to my hiding place, and saw him in a deep reverie, from which my sister's approach awakened him.—He started—She comes! cried he; methinks my heart feels more powerfully the influence of virtue's sacred dictates, and claims a nearer acquaintance with my Clarinda's soul.—My sister opened the door. Do not I intrude? said she, tenderly—Dearest and best of women, cried my brother, you cannot intrude—Receive me to your faithful bosom.—I am more than ever yours.—Our hands and hearts were joined long since, but now a firmer union secures us to each other. Our souls are now united.

Oh! answered my sister, giving him a look of ineffable softness, how amply do you repay my sufferings! To see you thus is joy—infinately beyond expression. I can only press you to my heart—Let my tears and caresses supply the deficiency of words—

My

My brother clasped her to his breast. Your tenderness, said he, most severely upbraids my guilt. It must be by copying your example I can hope to deserve you.—I am animated to the glorious attempt.—Oh! my love, my life!—Dissolved in tenderness, they could only gaze on each other in silent transport. I thought it was now in my power to contribute to their happiness. I flew to the nursery, seized little Charly in my arms, and entered the apartment of his fond parents.—The sight of the child strongly affected my brother. He sunk into a chair, and cast down his eyes with a conscious embarrassment. But soon, gazing on the dear babe, he seemed forgetful of our presence. My sister wept. I fear, said she, you have affected him too much. How steadily he fixes his eyes on the child!—I drew nearer to him: Receive, cried I, an affectionate sister's congratulation on this happy change—'Tis great—'tis noble—Forgive my impatience; love for my sister and you occasioned it. With mine, receive from this dear infant a fond embrace—He kissed the hand I held out; then looking again at little Charly, seemed to want resolution to speak to him.—

I added, Forgive me, my dearest brother, for bringing your sweet babe, before you was prepared to see him. It was inconsiderately done.—A sense of guilt, replied he, covers me with confusion—My dear child ! thy father blushes to behold thee—Wilt thou embrace me ?—See, cried my sister, see, he extends his little arms. My love, banish this gloom, and let him be a sharer of your tenderness. Do you then, answered my brother, take him in your arms, that I may weep over those who are dearest to me, yet whom I have most offended.—Some time passed in eloquent silence, whilst they hung round each other. At last, I thank you sister, said the happy husband and father, for all your goodness, and for this kind intent. For your love to the partner of my soul—I cannot thank you as I ought. He then embraced me—We all wept—Henceforth, answered I, your interests will never be divided—This is indeed, added my sister, a joyful day. Do not, my dearest, indulge one discontented thought.

Oh ! he cried, words cannot describe the emotions I feel. My wife !—My child !—My sister !—The tenderest embraces succeeded.

ceeded. It was for some minutes a scene of silent extacy.

When we were somewhat more composed, my brother resumed—To complete the family's happiness, I hope Miss Spendlove will soon bestow on my brother her heart and hand. He shall know all, and will, I doubt not, rejoice at my return to duty.

Well, my dear, answered my sister, your own judgment is your best adviser. You need not now be ashamed to acknowledge an error. Only forgive yourself, as heaven forgives the real penitent.

I must always blush, replied my brother, for the injuries I have inflicted on such excellence. But the blush that overspreads my cheek, flows from a heart conscious of your worth, and which never more can wrong your celestial goodness.—Oh! I am now again reconciled to life.—

He then sat some time in a thoughtful posture, leaning on his hand. We were fearful of his relapsing into melancholy, when he disclosed the subject of his contemplation, by addressing these lines to my sister :

*By my example let mankind be taught,
The snares of vice delude th' unsettled thought.*

*When virtue's charms from novelty allure,
 How weak the tie ! Her reign how insecure !
 But when conviction beams with fervid ray,
 And points to future bliss the certain way ;
 When true religion's sacred light appears ;
 When the blest form a mortal semblance wears ;
 We feel the energy of truth divine,
 Which glows benignant in a breast like thine.
 With thine my soul aspires to wing her flight,
 To scenes of endless joy and fullness of delight !*

Thus, Madam, I have performed my pleasing task. I have given you the matter, but the manner no pen nor pencil can delineate. A settled glow of delight blooms on their cheeks, and the rapture of triumphant virtue sparkles in their eyes.

Your daughter's charms have received additional graces from this transporting change, and my brother's person has acquired new beauties from the present serenity of his mind.

I, who for some months have had my natural liveliness over-clouded by melancholy, now break forth with a more than usual blaze of volatility.—My *curiosity* you will think has not slept ; but I must do myself the justice to say, I was actuated by a desire of losing no senti-

sentiment of your dear Clarinda's, and a hope of being instrumental to her happiness. It was not a mere restless *womanish* curiosity that seeks only to *know*, without a wish of improvement.—But whilst I disclaim curiosity, I shall incur the censure of vanity, and at the expence of the rest of my sex. I beg pardon, and retract any *unjust* accusation.

Mr. Frankly arrived in town last night, and shared our delight. He is now impatient to return to Miss Spendlove, and complete his own happiness.

Even the servants partake our joy, though they appear sensible of their mistress's delicacy by endeavours to conceal their observations and delight. You know, Madam, how much my brother and sister were always beloved. Nothing can be a more convincing proof of their goodness, and their servants' sincere affection, than the behaviour of the latter, since the time of their master's sad deviation. I can only say, they have seemed desirous to prove themselves worthy the mistress they serve.

My sister intends writing very soon.—As I was the unwilling instrument of confirming your misfortune, I am particularly indebted to her for giving me a commission to restore your happiness.

That it may be uninterrupted to your latest moment, (which I hope is far distant) is the earnest wish of

Your truly affectionate and faithful

LUCY GOODWILL,

LETTER XXX.

Mr. FRANKLY to Mrs. FRANKLY.

WITH what different emotions do I now take up the pen, to write to my dear mother, from those which lately agitated my soul.

My sister is again happy—My brother's affection I hope is secure beyond a possibility of relapse. But you know every circumstance, and I congratulate you on this joyful occasion. I only wished for this event to compleat *my* happiness. It is complete.—Miss Spendlove's no more—But *my Charlotte* still survives in Mrs. *Frankly*, and has, I hope, many years of bliss to enjoy, and to impart.

When I returned to her with the welcome account—Thank heaven! said she, with the most expressive air of satisfaction, My dear Mrs. Goodwill's virtue is at last rewarded.

warded. There was a time, continued she, blushing, when this circumstance would have given me an inexpressible shock, and made me envy her the possession of a heart deservedly her due; but my mind is purified from that drossy passion, and entertains none now, which I cannot with laudable pleasure avow.—By Mrs. Goodwill's generous conduct and admonitions I am become happy, and so sensible of my own happiness, that I believe no person has a greater share. There is a great deal of truth in this observation of a justly-admired writer :

*No man is happy, 'till he thinks on earth
There dwells not a more happy than himself;
Then envy dies, and love o'erflows on all,
And love o'er-flowing, makes an angel here.*

I praised her ingenuous confession, and importuned her to fix my happy day. I do not mean to raise unnecessary scruples, answered she; but will not your mother expect to be present at our marriage?—My mother, replied I, is so far from wishing to retard her children's happiness, that she will rejoice to hasten its completion. Your cousin cannot leave her country business, and expects to be with you. Here the ceremony may be privately

vately and speedily performed. If we go to **** it must not only be deferred, but be more public. We will go down as soon afterwards as you please. Well then, said she, I acquiesce, and find my own, in contributing to your satisfaction.

Yesterday made me the happiest of men. Miss Spendlove then accepted my hand and name.—Our honest cousin Bennet was transported into an uncommon elevation of spirits; and his amiable wife, with more politeness, but equal sincerity, joined in his congratulation.

I expect my brother and sister will soon leave town, and that we shall all be in L——re together. But the answer to a Letter I sent this evening will fix the time.

My Charlotte desires me to intreat you will continue to make my house your home, and hopes you will believe her heart is interested in your compliance. Though she first *mentioned* this desire, I earnestly join in it, and beg you will not scruple to grant our request. We have no separate inclinations, nor interests, no thwarting humours to disturb each other's tranquillity. My brother and sister will, I hope, oblige us by taking the advantage of that favourable situation in
which

which we are placed; and when you chuse to stay with them, we will not oppose your wishes.

Once more, Madam, I must congratulate you, and myself. My beloved Charlotte presents her duty. Her cousins send compliments.

I am certain nothing but *our* presence is wanting to render *your* joy complete; and can truly affirm *ours* will be increased, when we can personally assure you, that we shall ever be

Your dutiful,

and gratefully affectionate children,

HENRY and CHARLOTTE FRANKLY.

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LETTER XXXI.

Mrs. FRANKLY to Mrs. GOODWILL.

My dear Child,

I COULD, in my Letters to you, suppress my melancholy participation in your grief, because I would not injure the dignity of your conduct; but when I know you are acquainted with the informations I have received, and that you experience the most delightful change, I cannot forbear to join the warm congratulations of a mother, with those of your truly affectionate, though less interested friends. I only waited 'till I received the expected account of your brother's marriage.

Mr. Goodwill is again my beloved son.—He has entitled himself to the forgiveness and love of every good mind.—Your happiness is restored.—Your brother's is completed.—Come, my dear children, come, and render mine perfect.—I long to embrace the sweet image of your perfections, and to thank the friendly Miss Goodwill.—You, and they, have my love, blessing, and affectionate respects.

Your

Your sufferings, and your virtues, my Clarinda, have endeared you still more to the ever fond heart of

Your affectionate mother,

MARIANA FRANKLY.

LETTER XXXII.

Mrs. GOODWILL to Mrs. FRANKLY.

LITTLE did I imagine my dear and honoured mother was so fully acquainted with the uneasiness her now-happy daughter has suffered. A thousand thanks, Madam, for that sympathetic tenderness you felt for me. You forgave my silence.—You imputed it to the true cause.—I could not accuse my husband, without a breach of duty, and an insult to my love. I never, 'till then, wished to conceal a thought from you.—But why do I dwell on the unpleasing subject? Mr. Goodwill is restored to me—Delightful reflection! Which absorbs the remembrance of every painful idea.

It is not the charm of novelty, a sudden flash of beauty, that attracts him; it is not merely esteem for my unrepining submission;

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it is a proper sense of his duty to his God, his fellow-creatures, and himself, that has reclaimed him. The divine author of his being has enabled him to see his errors in their true light, and he starts with horror on the review.—His heart has been *deceived* into a violation of his duty. No man ever practised the laws of religion and morality with more sincerity. His gentle disposition, extensive benevolence, and frankness of soul, were conspicuous in every instance of his conduct. Even whilst under the influence of that base Lord, the same tenderness animated his behaviour to me, though it was accompanied with an air of dejection, and a consciousness of guilt, that shocked me to the soul.

He sometimes avoided me; but his eyes betrayed an unwillingness to part from me, whilst he feared my presence.

Oh! Madam, what did I suffer? I reviewed my own conduct, and could not accuse myself of being accessory to this misfortune. Yet perhaps the praises of a husband, who still continued the lover, might have excited in me an unjustifiable vanity, and this dreadful circumstance was wisely intended by the Deity to inspire me with more humble sentiments. To expostulate, I feared
might

might estrange his affection, and I hoped, *that* melancholy which I could not disguise, and that tender behaviour which my heart prompted, would awaken his reflection, and enable his duty to gain the victory. Yet, had not this wished-for event happened at this time, I was determined to urge some mild remonstrances. I was convinced that *my present ease* ought not to be put in competition with my husband's *temporal and eternal happiness*:—That perhaps I hazarded both, whilst I preserved some degree of his regard, by means which were real transgressions of my duty; and which, when he recovered from his delirium, would lessen me in his esteem. I did not consider my dear husband as merely a partner in this transitory life, but as a being formed for the enjoyment of a more perfect state; a state, where I was certain, that a mutual discharge of duty would heighten that love of soul, which must constitute great part of future felicity. In the extatic prospect of unlimited joys, I lost that contracted view which terminated in my own present peace. I was deeply engrossed in contemplation of the raptures celestial spirits must feel, when they receive amongst the heavenly choir the souls of those who had been most
 dear

dear to them on earth.—Mr. Goodwill has recalled me to a love of this life, and invigorates my hopes of another. But how I have insensibly wandered into a recapitulation of my past woes! Excuse, Madam, the natural workings of a transported heart, and forgive me, that my own happiness has awhile rendered me forgetful to congratulate you on my brother's.—My new sister is truly amiable: she is very desirous you should live with her, and intreats I will not contest the point. I have agreed to acquiesce in your determination. I do not wish to deprive her and my brother entirely of your company, but I would share it more equally with them. We shall be in the country next week. I impatiently expect the time of seeing you, and hope we never shall again be so long parted.

I have gained the esteem of two very amiable persons, one of whom, though both but of yesterday's *acquaintance*, has proved himself my sincere friend. I shall secure him a place in your heart by communicating, when I see you, a Letter he wrote to my dear Mr. Goodwill. In the mean time, I shall acquire for him a great share of your regard, by a repetition of his behaviour.

Mr,

Mr. Goodwill had informed me of his obligations to this worthy man, whose holy profession gives him an opportunity of a wider extension of his benevolence.

Mr. Goodwill was with me in the nursery, playing with little Charly, when the servant told him Mr. Forest was below, and desired to speak to him. My husband, in a joyful manner, turned to me, and asked, if I would admit Mr. Forest into that room? for he was a friend, whom to use with formality would be to offer him an affront. I gladly consented to his request. He went, and soon returned with the good man, whose looks are a faithful transcript of his mind.

After the usual salutations, My friend's tenderness, said Mr. Goodwill, forbids his mention of a subject, which he thinks may overwhelm me with deserved confusion; but my dear Sir, continued he, my reformation is perfected, and I am not ashamed to acknowledge my past errors.

Mr. Forest struggled to disperse a rising tear of joy, but it *would* force a passage down his cheek. He pressed my hand, and cried, Blessed be God!—I am sure you deserve, and may you continue to be happy.—When we were recovered from the flutter this inter-

view occasioned, he took my sweet boy in his arms, kissed him, and wished he might resemble us as much in mind as in person.—He then asked leave to introduce his daughter to me that afternoon, as he heard we soon left town. On leaving me, he stepped into Mr. Goodwill's study.—Perhaps, said he, you will think I am guilty of an improper freedom, when I again offer my advice; but I cannot be indifferent in a matter truly essential to your present and future happiness. I see I wrong you by this suspicion. Permit me then to recommend to you a duty which is incumbent on all men, but neglected by most. I mean that of constant family and private prayer.—The blessings conferred on us by the Almighty, are unthankfully disregarded. We must be deprived of them, to become truly sensible of their value; for whilst a constant succession of bounties flow in upon us, we expect a repetition of them, without an endeavour to deserve them; and what ought to augment, destroys our thankfulness and gratitude. When we receive a *single act* of friendship from men, we are eager to return the obligation, or at least to pay our grateful acknowledgments, whilst the *repeated*, the *inexhaustible* favours of the Deity

are received without observation. On you, my dear Mr. Goodwill, the mercies of Providence have been very liberally bestowed. Forget not to adore the divine source of every blessing, and let no earthly attachment weaken your aspirations after a glorious eternity.—Remember there is no surer defence against vice, than constant prayer. “The fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” If you would preserve in your children, and servants, a regard to their several duties, be regular in your family prayers. Shew yourself affected whilst you read; and let your example strengthen the precept, that it may influence *their* practice.—I would by no means recommend a form of prayer, that would fatigue by its length. But it is necessary to appoint some particular form, or we shall become unsteady in the performance of this duty, content ourselves with the repetition of a few unmeaning words, and be soon lost in the multiplicity of intrusive thoughts. I would chuse such prayers as shew our penitence for offences, our dependance on God, and gratitude for his mercies. The Deity best knows our real wants, and what will most contribute to our happiness. He regards not the length of the address, but the

sincerity of the suppliant. Depend upon it, constant prayer will best preserve such a frame of mind, as will render us acceptable to God.

What an excellent man, my dear mother, is this ! Mr. Goodwill loves and reveres him beyond expression, and is determined to resume that laudable custom, which you know we pursued in the country, and which, had it been continued in town, might probably have prevented the deviation, or occasioned an earlier reformation.

In the afternoon Mr. Forest returned with his daughter. She has a very fine person, and an engaging behaviour, tho' somewhat singular. I hope, by her father's parental care, and her own good disposition, she will not exchange her present simplicity of sentiment and manners for the arts of coquetry and modish insipidity. Her father privately told me, he wished he had not indulged her taste for romances, which affected her imagination the more, from the retirement she lived in. But, added he, to thwart her inclination entirely, might have rendered me less dear to her, and the books I forbade more desirable. She is now pleased with more useful compositions; and I hope, by observations on them

them and life, will acquire a different train of ideas.

We were unseasonably interrupted in our conversation by an unexpected visitor. It was Lord Tastely. He met Mr. Goodwill and me at the house of a common acquaintance, and forced from my husband an invitation. His Lady had honoured me with her company, and charmed me by her behaviour. I had returned her visit. A recital of his Lordship's deficiency of judgment may not prove unentertaining to you. Soon after he was seated, and had displayed many proofs that he had a singular good opinion of himself, the door again opened, and Lady Tastely entered the room. It is impossible to describe his Lordship's confusion. He started, and turning to Mr. Goodwill, assured him, *upon his honour*, he did not know her Ladyship's design, or he should have deferred his visit.

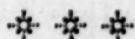
Lady Tastely observed his behaviour with a look of affectionate concern, and spoke to him several times in a tone of sweetness; but he regarded her with a supercilious air, and seemed to be surprized at her confidence in addressing him. My Lord soon took leave, and his Lady presently followed. At parting,
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she wished me health. Happiness I need not wish you, added she, with a sigh that expressed her sensibility of her Lord's unkindness. As soon as she was gone, Poor woman ! cried Mr. Goodwill, she most severely suffers for the ambition of her father, to whom a title was an irresistible temptation. Lord Tastely is a composition of pride and moroseness, and a slave to the modish customs of the ill-judging part of the world.—How ridiculous, said Mr. Forest, is it to be ashamed of a connection, which constitutes the happiness, and is the glory of a rational man ! They who blush *on being observed* to perform a duty, will soon be ashamed, and cease to practise it. A compliance with custom, in opposition to reason and virtue, is *really* shameful. How I pity poor Lady Tastely, who I perceive loves, whilst she must despise her Lord ! This subject engrossed us for some time.

Before Mr. Forest took leave, Mr. Goodwill intreated him to give us a promise of his and Miss Forest's company at * * * *, and obtained it for next summer, on condition we would the following year visit them in Oxfordshire.

We have promised to introduce my sister to them, who was engaged abroad before
Mr.

Mr. Forest called : she was much concerned for her absence ; but we consoled her by the assurance of seeing them in a few days.



This moment Mr. Goodwill informs me he has received a letter from my brother, who must be at his own house in the middle of next week, to renew some leases, &c. and begs we will accompany him and my sister. We shall joyfully comply with his request, and hope to be with you on Wednesday night.—My little Charly will smile his joy on seeing you.—My dear husband fears he shall not be re-admitted to that share of your affection he once enjoyed. My sister and I have assured him he wrongs the goodness of your heart, which is conspicuous in your letter, and the whole tenor of your conduct.

Oh ! Madam, how delightful are the rewards of duty even in this life ! How amply are all my sufferings repaid ! As virtue has a resource in the most afflicting incidents of mortality ; so its delights are heightened by the certainty of their future increase and perpetual duration.—With what exultation of heart do I expect our next happy meeting, when I consider, that though we *must* part again,

again, yet we shall be restored to each other, without the dread of another separation!—

Animated by the enjoyment of present delights, and the prospect of future felicity, I can truly subscribe myself your happy, as I ever was

Your dutiful and affectionate daughter,

CLARINDA GOODWILL.

The E N D.



